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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence in Third World Countries

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A Research Paper

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January 1983

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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence in Third World Countries

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A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by [redacted] Theater Forces Division, Office of Soviet Analysis. [redacted]

Comments and queries are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief, Theater Forces Division, SOVA, [redacted]

This paper was coordinated with the National Intelligence Council. [redacted]

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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence in Third World Countries (

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Key Judgments

Information available as of 1 July 1982 was used in this report.

Naval calls and contacts are often among the first tools used to demonstrate Soviet interest in a country and frequently continue to be among the most visible. Nonetheless, the Navy is but one—often a minor one—of a number of political, military, commercial, and other instruments that Moscow uses in building its relationship with a Third World state. In some cases, it is difficult to isolate the naval relationship from an extensive military training and aid program or from a variety of other state-to-state ties. In others, the wariness of the Third World state has kept Soviet naval ties to a minimum and they are identifiable only as a potential tool.

Despite serious setbacks—such as their expulsion from naval facilities in Somalia and Egypt—the Soviets have had some success in transforming their naval presence abroad into influence with Third World host states. Many of the factors that determine whether naval presence is effective in securing improved access or political concessions are beyond Moscow's control. The Soviets, however, remain committed to building naval ties throughout the Third World. They seem to view the establishment of naval influence as a long-term process of grasping opportunities and to accept the uncertainties of naval presence as a tool of foreign policy.

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Throughout the past decade, as their overseas naval operations have expanded, the Soviets have consistently probed for new or improved access to regional naval facilities. Currently a small number of Third World ports provide significant support to Soviet ships. Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft deploy regularly to five nations—two of which are Communist states—outside the Warsaw Pact. The Soviets' concern about appearing neocolonialist and their suspicions about the durability of foreign basing agreements restrict the intensity of their search for naval access. Nonetheless, they are willing to nurture marginal naval relationships in the hope that the political or military situation will shift to their advantage and result in concrete naval privileges.

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In seeking access to facilities in the Third World, the Soviets hope both to secure support for the operations of their naval ships and aircraft and to improve their image and influence with local governments. Because of the way in which the Soviet Navy operates its ships in distant areas, however, access to foreign port facilities represents an important convenience, rather than a necessity that drives Soviet policy. Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft, on the other hand, require access to airfields in the Third World if they are to operate in regions distant from the USSR.

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Soviet naval relations with seven Third World states are presented in the appendix. The activities described and the responses by the host governments are similar to those observed elsewhere in the Third World. Given comparable opportunities in the future, Soviet tactics may resemble those described in the case studies and also may reflect that Moscow has learned from its past experiences. Soviet naval ties with each of the seven nations studied—and with other Third World states—have some unique aspects. Nonetheless, a number of common threads emerge that define how the Soviets establish and use naval presence and highlight those elements of the Soviet–host state relationship that condition the success of Soviet naval policy:

- The Soviets take the long view with respect to the use of naval facilities. They do not press so hard for access that they endanger broader political objectives and generally relent if their requests for access appear to threaten their relationship with the host government.

- The most important single determinant of the nature, extent, and effect of Soviet naval presence is the overall political orientation of the Third World country. Where the ground has been prepared by internal and regional developments that create or reinforce a perception of need for Soviet military, technical, and economic assistance, the Navy can be successfully used as a foreign policy tool.

- A large and active Soviet naval presence can limit the options available to the host state by highlighting its ties to Moscow, which may undercut its relations with more moderate neighboring states. Both Moscow and the host government retain some flexibility, however, and their naval ties are unlikely to cause either to alter the fundamental thrust of their regional policies.

- The Soviets try to use offers of naval equipment and technical services to reinforce their presence and to create a self-perpetuating dependence. Such dependence may result directly in naval concessions. Reliance on Soviet naval aid often outlives the initial gratitude for such assistance, however, as was the case in Guinea.

- The Soviets have been able to use their Navy in regime support activities that capitalize on the insecurity or paranoia that so often typifies Third World regimes.

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- A major limit on the long-term potential for extensive foreign naval involvement is the extreme sensitivity of Third World countries concerning their nonaligned status and image.

- Soviet naval presence tends to be low key by Western standards: facilities are generally small, austere, and easily moved in an emergency; and contact between Soviet naval personnel and local populations is restricted.

- Most Third World countries are concerned about the security threat posed by a Soviet presence.

- For most Third World governments the economic benefits of a Soviet naval presence do not appear to be large enough to influence decisively their policies.

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Moscow's low-key approach to the acquisition and use of foreign facilities could change in coming years. If the pace of Soviet naval activity in distant areas increases to the extent that the burden on the afloat logistic system is excessive, the Soviets probably would be more insistent in their requests for naval access. Where an individual country develops new vulnerabilities, Moscow might apply more pressure for access than in the past. Barring such changes, however, the Soviets are likely to continue to view the search for overseas facilities as a long-term process of cautious probing.

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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence in Third World Countries

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Introduction

As the Soviet Navy has expanded its area of operations, Western nations have been increasingly concerned about Soviet efforts to use naval forces to build influence in the Third World and have focused on Soviet access in Third World states as a measure of Soviet success. This paper examines the interaction between Soviet naval presence and the policies and orientation of local governments. It looks at Soviet goals and the elements that constitute naval presence, discusses the requirements for naval access that result from the Soviet Navy's operating philosophy, and on the basis of case studies of seven countries makes general observations about Moscow's use of naval forces in the Third World.

Scope and Method of Analysis

The Soviet Navy attempts to influence an individual state through ship visits, the setting up of shore establishments, and military assistance. Soviet naval presence may also affect the state indirectly even when its ships and personnel are not physically within the boundaries of the state. General perceptions of Soviet naval strength vis-a-vis Western or regional navies can have a real impact on the policies of small states. This paper deals with the first aspect of Soviet naval presence—Moscow's efforts to use the Navy directly to improve its position in Third World countries, to influence events in the local country, or to obtain access to local facilities that will support its naval activities.

The observations drawn from the case studies appear to be valid for other Third World states even though the paper does not present the entire range of Soviet naval activities worldwide. The nations used as case studies were chosen because they have a wide variety of political and ideological orientations and are geographically disparate. One—South Yemen—is closely associated with the USSR and permits the use of substantial facilities on its territory. A second—Guinea—appears to be moving away from the USSR and has gradually reduced the Soviet Navy's access to its facilities. Two—Cape Verde and Seychelles—are frequently rumored to be moving closer to the Soviets and to be prepared to provide bases or facilities for Soviet ships and aircraft. Three—Mauritius, Singapore, and Tunisia—have been basically Western oriented but have allowed Soviet port calls or repair of Soviet naval ships.

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There are many additional Third World states with which the USSR has attempted to establish a naval relationship. Although they are not included as individual case studies, we have looked at the history of Soviet naval relations with these states and do not find any inconsistencies with our overall judgments. On the contrary, it appears that additional case studies that might be undertaken in the future would reaffirm rather than contradict our general conclusions. Even the Soviet naval relationships with Cuba and Vietnam—which were excluded from the case studies because their Communist governments are so closely aligned with the USSR as to be part of the Soviet "Bloc"—exhibit many of the commonalities discussed in the overview.

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Some Soviet experiences with a state other than those discussed in the case studies seemed particularly apt to our observations. When we have drawn on the evidence of such experiences, we have tried to limit our references to situations whose basic facts are widely known, such as the Soviet expulsion from Egypt or Somalia.

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We have tried to restrict our judgments to naval matters. Naval calls and contacts are often among the first tools used to demonstrate Soviet interest in a country and often continue to be among the most visible. Nevertheless, the Navy is but one—often a

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minor one—of a number of political, military, commercial, and other instruments that Moscow uses in building its relationship with a Third World state. In the case of South Yemen, for example, it is difficult to isolate the naval relationship from an extensive military training and aid program and from a host of other state-to-state ties.

The case studies focus on the activities and impact of Soviet naval ships and those merchant ships that provide support to naval forces. Data on ship-days and port visits reflect the activity of naval combatants, auxiliaries, and hydrographic research and space support ships subordinate to the Navy but not those attached to Soviet civilian scientific agencies. The case studies also address the activities of Soviet naval personnel, both those aboard the ships and those who make up shore establishments.

The case studies refer to some issues that are relevant to the overall Soviet maritime presence in a country but are not purely naval. Local attitudes toward the Soviet Navy are often colored by experiences or perceptions that involve the USSR's civilian ships or Moscow's constant search for access for its merchant or fishing fleets. Local resentment of these efforts or the belief that all Soviet ships are "spy ships" often spills over and becomes part of the local reaction to Soviet naval presence.

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Background

Naval Presence Defined

Goals of Naval Presence. The Soviets continue to devote resources to establishing a naval presence in many Third World states despite their uneven record in using naval presence to influence Third World governments and the comparatively small number of states that provide logistic services to the Navy. On balance, they appear more interested in the long-term goal of building political influence than in the naval facilities themselves—partially because of their limited operational dependence on shore-based support as discussed below. Such an approach accords well with the opportunism of their overall policy in the Third World. Moreover, Moscow's continued commitment to maintaining its naval presence in the Third World suggests that the Soviets are realistic about the pitfalls of using naval influence in an unstable environment and have not been disillusioned by the setbacks they have suffered.

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The objectives of naval presence fall into three areas:

- In the broadest terms—and beyond the scope of this study—Moscow seeks to use the Navy to enhance its prestige and contribute to its image as a superpower with a right to a voice in regional or international security questions. Such prestige provides a "reservoir of credibility" that can make the application of force unnecessary in some circumstances or can foreclose on an opponent's ability to respond with force. The role of this objective in Soviet thinking was evident in the expansion of the Indian Ocean Squadron during 1980 or the reinforcement of the Mediterranean Squadron during the crisis in Lebanon. In addition, Moscow hopes that its Navy will undercut the political impact of the presence of Western naval forces and that individual states can be encouraged to deny access to Western ships and aircraft.

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- On a practical level, the Soviets seek access to naval facilities that will support the routine deployment of ships and aircraft to the region. Although Soviet requirements for such support are minimal (see below), in peacetime access to local facilities can ease the logistics burden of overseas deployments. Soviet use of Alexandria during the early 1970s, for example, contributed to Moscow's ability to sustain the Mediterranean Squadron, particularly the submarines that would otherwise have had to return to the Northern Fleet for upkeep periods. Following their expulsion from Alexandria, the Soviets reduced their force level in the region and gradually increased the proportion of fleet support ships serving with the squadron.[2]

- An additional operational benefit of overseas facilities is the increased availability of naval forces for contingency responses. Ships deployed to the Mediterranean and serviced there can more rapidly reinforce the token patrol off West Africa, for example, than can ships required to transit from the Northern Fleet. The same applies to ships transiting to the southwest Indian Ocean islands from the Arabian Sea rather than from distant Pacific Fleet bases.

- In individual states, the Soviets hope that their naval presence will contribute to a close and congenial relationship with the local government that will permit Moscow to influence its foreign policy in directions favorable to the USSR or to affect internal developments. In the case of an unstable regime, Moscow may hope to shore up an individual leader—with little commitment or resources—and secure his gratitude. In other cases, they may hope that the presence of even a small Soviet force will impress the local government with Soviet capabilities to protect or harm. In addition, the Soviet Navy is probably expected to build professional ties with the local military, developing a lobby within the host government and nurturing loyalty in officers who might be helpful in the future. Finally, Soviet open literature emphasizes the role of the Soviet sailor as an ambassador of good will, and Moscow may retain expectations that the Navy will enhance the popular image of the USSR. 25X1

Although these objectives are mutually reinforcing, they are not interdependent. Nor do the Soviets appear to believe that each can be achieved to the fullest measure in every situation. Rather, they appear willing to advance more quickly in some areas than others or even to recognize that an individual goal may be temporarily inappropriate. The lack of emphasis on popular good will in Aden in recent years, for example, reflects Moscow's realistic reassessment of its chances for success. In most cases, the Soviets seem to recognize that the value of naval presence lies in its long-term potential, not just in its immediate short-term benefits. 25X1

Elements of Naval Presence. The term "naval presence" covers more ground than Soviet use of local naval facilities. It incorporates efforts by the Soviets to use their Navy to cement relations with the host state, as well as pressure to expand Soviet naval privileges. It also includes the operational and symbolic value of having highly visible military forces far from the shores of the USSR. 25X1

Naval presence has generally involved at least occasional port visits. These have been either official friendly calls involving government ceremonies or public relations events, or unpublicized operational calls for crew rest or replenishment. If a closer relationship has evolved, it normally has included several of the following characteristics:

- Frequent, overlapping port calls so that Soviet ships are continuously present.
- Freedom for Soviet ships from normal entry requirements or priority for Soviet ships.
- Reserved access to berths or permission to station logistics ships in port.
- Workspace, housing, and recreational facilities ashore for Soviet personnel who direct the movement of Soviet ships in port and coordinate maintenance periods.
- Storage ashore for parts or fuel.

[2] Current Soviet access for submarine upkeep in Syria partially replaced the facilities in Egypt, but the Mediterranean Squadron remains at a lower level than in the early 1970s. We believe that the current level represents what the Soviets consider the optimum force required for peacetime use. 25X1

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- Use of naval-related facilities such as airfields, communications stations, drydocks, or other repair facilities.
- Periodic or continuous deployment of naval reconnaissance aircraft to a local airfield.
- Soviet control of access to Soviet-used facilities.

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Offers of naval equipment and training of personnel or technicians nearly always have accompanied the establishment of a naval presence. Soviet naval auxiliaries frequently have been deployed to help Third World nations maintain or operate their Soviet-built naval vessels, and Soviet combatants have conducted joint exercises with those of host navies. In addition, the Soviets occasionally have offered to improve or construct naval or air facilities for the host state—probably hoping to have access to the upgraded facilities.

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In some cases, Soviet naval ties with an individual state may remain at the minimal level of infrequent port calls for a number of years if neither side feels compelled to develop the relationship further. Moscow may view its deployments to the region coupled with such occasional calls as sufficient to provide an option for the future. Soviet calls to Benin, Togo, or Nigeria combined with the small West African patrol might fall into this category.

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Although Soviet naval presence in most cases has resulted from the accumulation of privileges and reliance on Soviet naval assistance, in others it has been a sudden outgrowth of operational military support to a Third World country. The Soviets established a naval presence in Guinean waters, for example, apparently at the request of President Sekou Toure following a Portuguese-sponsored raid in 1970.

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In some cases, the Soviet presence has not been naval but maritime. Moscow has negotiated fishing agreements or offered to develop fishing ports for nations that have not granted the Soviet Navy any concessions. These maritime relationships are potentially valuable in the overall relationship with a Third World state and are sometimes viewed by the host government or the West as beneficial to the Soviet Navy. Such contacts, however, have little operational relevance for the Navy and are difficult to use to create or reinforce naval ties. The fisheries drydock that the Soviets have placed in Mozambique, for example, is neither available to the Navy nor large enough to service the naval ships that normally serve in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, as several of the case studies illustrate, resentment over Soviet fishing practices can undercut naval initiatives, and wariness about ultimate Soviet intentions can interfere even with efforts to conclude fisheries agreements. Similarly, Soviet failure to deliver on promises of port development, as in the case of Cape Verde, can create animosity between Moscow and the potential aid recipient.

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Soviet Naval Operations in Distant Areas and Requirements for Access to Local Facilities

The way in which the Soviet Navy functions in distant areas minimizes the requirement for access to facilities ashore. The Soviet Navy relies primarily on afloat logistic support for warships operating overseas, using naval auxiliaries—tankers, cargo ships, tenders, and repair ships—or merchant ships under naval contract. The Soviets deploy proportionately far more auxiliaries outside home waters than do Western navies and frequently have a ratio of 2:1 between auxiliaries and warships (see figure 1). They rarely purchase fuel from foreign countries, even in the Middle East, preferring to conserve hard currency by transporting fuel from distant Soviet ports. Their maintenance of warships overseas is minimal compared with that of other navies and is performed by the Soviets' own repair ships.

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Nonetheless, the Navy's operational flexibility can benefit from the simplicity of performing logistic support in friendly ports, from having a convenient stopover for crew rest or rotation and mail call, and from having a local source of fresh water and perishable provisions. Where they have free and regular access, they often station a tender or repair ship for limited maintenance, an oiler, or other types of service craft. By performing pretransit and posttransit upkeep or middeployment maintenance at such facilities, the Soviets can extend the deployment period of individual units. Pacific Fleet submarines serviced at Ethiopia's Dahlak Island, for example, can remain on station longer before returning to their home fleet.

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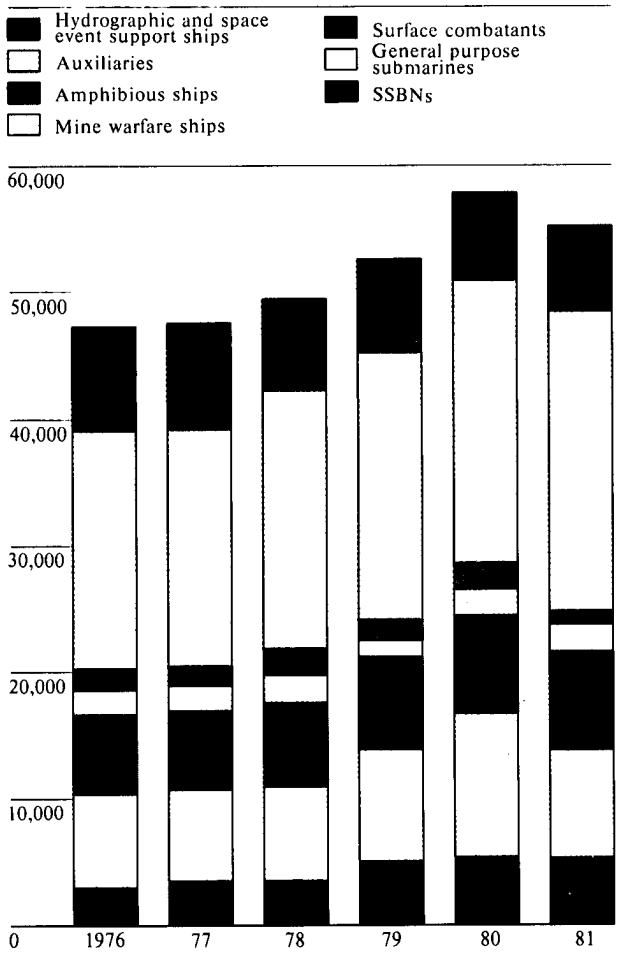
Figure 1
Soviet Naval Deployments Outside Home Waters, 1976-81



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Where they have no access to port facilities, the Soviets often use sheltered anchorages in international waters as logistic centers. They may install a mooring buoy, station auxiliaries there, and bring in other naval ships for replenishment and upkeep. The Soviets have established a number of such anchorages—in the Indian Ocean, for example, at Socotra Island, and in the Mediterranean, in the Gulfs of Sollum and Hamamet. (Figure 2 shows the anchorages and port and air facilities currently used by the Soviet Navy.) On occasion, Soviet ships use anchorages in preference to local facilities. For example, despite their extensive access in South Yemen, the Soviets sometimes refuel or repair ships prior to entering Aden, possibly because they are sensitive about having such operations observed.

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In part, the Soviet Navy can function with the combination of afloat support and limited shore-based support because its activity level is lower than that of Western navies. In general, Soviet ships are under way only about one-third of the time they are deployed, thus conserving fuel and limiting wear and tear. The limited access to overseas ports enjoyed by the Soviets may contribute to the minimal routine activity level of their ships but is not the decisive factor. For example, shortly after their expulsion from Berbera in 1977, the Soviets sharply increased their naval presence in the Indian Ocean and undertook the sealift to Ethiopia. Similarly, although they have never fully replaced the facilities lost in Egypt, the Soviets have reinforced the Mediterranean Squadron several times since 1976 and have sustained a higher-than-normal tempo of operations for the duration of a regional crisis.

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On balance, then, access to local naval facilities has been an important convenience but—in most places—not a necessity that drives Soviet policy. Moscow's efforts to secure or preserve access do not extend to altering the fundamental thrust of Soviet foreign policy or to preventing the Soviets from taking actions that diverge from the interests of the host nation.

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Other aspects of naval presence create different requirements. Naval aircraft need landing rights and some technical support to conduct overseas deployments. The Soviets seem to restrict themselves to a minimum of local facilities, however, and to station only reconnaissance and antisubmarine warfare aircraft abroad.[3] Their deployments to Syria and Libya

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in the last two years demonstrate their ability to operate with only temporary logistic support.

Themes Common to Soviet Naval Relations With Third World States

The common themes that emerge from our analysis of the case studies and our assessment of other countries with which the Soviets have a naval relationship will not startle readers familiar with naval matters. The case studies confirm some of the Intelligence Community's intuitive judgments about the factors that condition the success or failure of Soviet efforts to build and use naval presence and how Third World nations may view the Soviet Navy.

Congruent Interests. The most important single determinant of the nature, extent, and effect of Soviet naval presence is the overall political orientation of the Third World country. When the ground has been prepared by internal and regional developments that make the state ideologically compatible with the Soviets and that create or reinforce a perception of need for Soviet military, technical, and economic assistance, the Navy can be extensively and successfully used as a foreign policy tool. Ideological purity is not a necessary ingredient; the anticolonial experience of most Third World countries and Soviet political support for the struggle against Western domination have provided a sufficient basis for association with the USSR.

The most extensive and durable naval relationships among the seven cases are those established in Guinea and South Yemen. Both were logical associates for the USSR in their respective regions because of their anti-Western revolutions, their left-leaning governments, and because their insecurity or ambitions gave them a strong interest in Soviet assistance. Similar calculations have been evident in Soviet naval ties with Libya, Syria, and Ethiopia—cases in which Soviet naval initiatives have capitalized on both anti-Western sentiments and regional tensions. In Libya, for example, a longstanding arms supply role that included naval equipment has widened to a wary acceptance of the presence of Soviet warships and aircraft largely because of Qadhafi's ambitions and his fears of Western reaction

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Initially, the Soviets may even find opportunities for access dictated by the political orientation of nonaligned states. These governments may grant the Soviets some naval access to balance their Western ties and reinforce their nonaligned image. Tunisia, for example, views the extent of access that it permits the USSR as a counterweight to the wide range of ties between Tunis and the West. At various times, Singapore, Cape Verde, and Mauritius have made the same evaluation. Obviously, access based on such calculations by nonaligned states is less secure than that granted by states with greater affinity for the USSR. Nonetheless, it permits the Soviets to maintain a limited naval presence that may expand if circumstances permit.

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A natural corollary of the political or ideological affinity that normally exists between Moscow and a host state is that naval presence is most effective in encouraging policies favored by the Soviets when the interests of the smaller state are similarly inclined. Guinea and South Yemen have cooperated with the Soviets and have provided facilities to support Soviet undertakings because of their own ideological orientation, regional alliances, or political interests. South Yemen, for example, had already begun to provide assistance to Ethiopia before the USSR initiated its sealift to Asmara. The case studies offer no example in which the Soviets successfully exploited their naval presence to pressure countries to adopt policies not to their liking. Nor does a naval relationship with Moscow appear decisive in preventing a nation from taking an anti-Soviet stand as Singapore did on the issue of Afghanistan.

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Where Soviet leaders have developed a sophisticated understanding of the dynamics in a region—as they seem to have in the Indian Ocean island states, for

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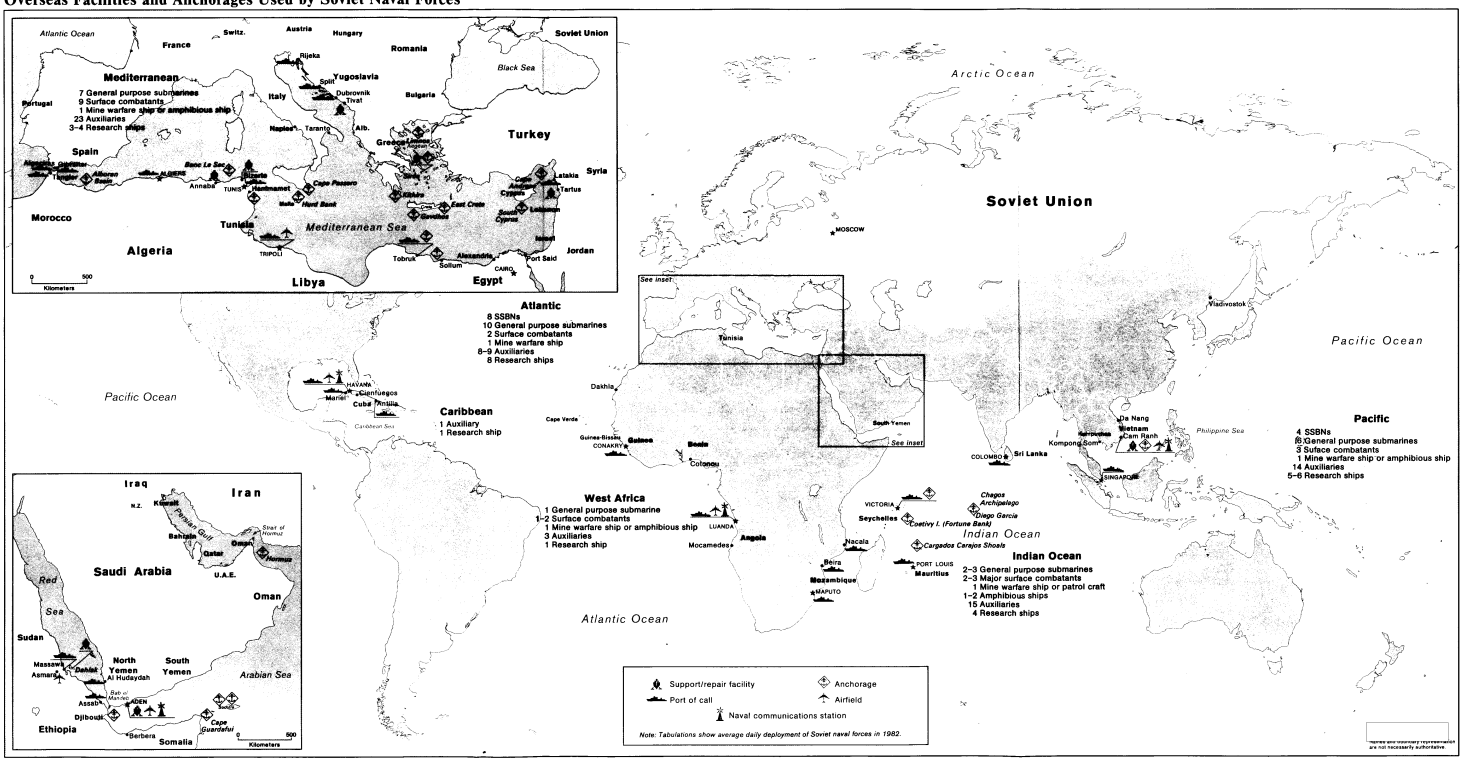
Figure 2
Overseas Facilities and Anchorages Used by Soviet Naval Forces



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example—naval policy can contribute to the success of the overall policy. Where such an understanding is lacking, however, or where Moscow has been inept and blundering—as in its early efforts to bring Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Yemen together—naval incentives cannot overcome the basic weaknesses of Soviet policy.

Soviet Calculation of Benefits. The Soviets appear to take the long view with respect to the use of naval facilities, viewing such access as only a small aspect of their foreign policy. They do not press so hard for facilities that they endanger broader political objectives. Their willingness to depend heavily upon floating logistic support is, in strictly military terms, a weakness; politically, it probably is an advantage.

In some circumstances—for instance in the Indian Ocean island states where their need for logistic support is limited and their opportunities are uncertain—their policies show a willingness to forgo or limit their own use of facilities in the interests of denying or limiting US access and of increasing their political influence in the region. Their broad support for the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace concept favored by many regional states reflects this policy, as have a variety of initiatives by the late Premier Brezhnev and other Soviet officials for talks that would limit Great Power forces and facilities in the Indian Ocean region. The Soviets quietly complied with a major change in Seychelles policy designed to restrict calls by ships of all non–Indian Ocean navies. In fact, once Victoria had decided to alter its policy, Moscow may have played a behind-the-scenes role in formulating the terms of the new regulations, which effectively prohibit visits by US Navy ships. Although the new rules also limit Soviet port calls, Moscow probably would not be sorry to see other regional states, such as Mauritius, take a similar approach.

The Soviets are constantly probing for access to port and air facilities throughout the Third World, and they have developed a wide range of enticements to tempt target governments. Under the right circumstances—where they believe that a client is deeply in debt to the USSR, both financially and politically—Soviet importuning may approach a level that could be described as "pressure." The Soviets have "pressed" Guinea with limited success. In general, however, they stop well short of the "demands" they are so often reported to have made. Moreover, when asked to leave or to limit their naval presence—as in Egypt, Somalia, Guinea, or Singapore—the Soviets do so promptly and with relatively little fuss.

Limitations of Options. Soviet naval presence can influence the flexibility of both the host state and the USSR. Extensive use of its facilities by a Great Power implies a lack of independence that can limit the choices available to the host government. The clearest example is South Yemen, whose support for Soviet military deliveries to Ethiopia—an undertaking in which the Soviet Navy and its access to South Yemeni facilities played an important role—probably was the final blow to Aden's developing rapprochement with Saudi Arabia. Although none of the case studies demonstrates a similar restraint on Soviet options, it is possible to envision a situation in which a strong Soviet interest in maintaining or expanding access could involve Moscow in limited compromises with the host state.

Limitation of the policies of either partner is reversible, however, as was demonstrated by the Somali invasion of Ethiopia in 1977, the subsequent Soviet decision to support Ethiopia over Somalia, and the resulting expulsion of the Soviets from Somali facilities. Extensive military assistance or an expensive investment in naval facilities will not force Moscow to accept policies of the host state that run counter to Soviet interests nor compel the local government to abide by Soviet dictates.

In contrast, the Navy can provide considerable flexibility to the Soviets in dealing with several states in the same region. Access to facilities in one state does not rule out overtures for additional access in a competing state. For example, the Soviets have managed to secure some access to port facilities in North Yemen while maintaining their substantial naval presence in South Yemen.

Naval Assistance. The Soviets seek to secure self-perpetuating forms of access. They offer naval equipment to bind the client state to the USSR by a

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continuing need for spare parts and repair services. A continuing Soviet naval presence is frequently required to operate and maintain the equipment, and much of the training of Third World personnel is conducted in the Soviet Union.

Where countries have accepted Soviet naval equipment or assistance with building and improving port and air facilities, the Soviets often have been able to capitalize—at least for some period of time—on the access provided. Some of the host states have navies made up almost entirely of Soviet-built combatants, such as South Yemen, Syria, and Ethiopia. The Soviets also provide naval craft for paramilitary duties such as fisheries patrol to states like Cape Verde and the Seychelles. Extensive access to facilities in Guinea and South Yemen almost certainly grew in part out of Soviet largesse, and some officers of the client navies must feel not only dependence but also loyalty. Joint exercises such as those conducted with Syria or South Yemen in recent years also may reinforce professional ties between the two navies.

Despite these benefits of Soviet naval presence, many host countries come to resent their visitors over time. The case study on Guinea provides a good example. Soviet ties to Guinea have suffered from the "what have you done for me lately?" syndrome; gratitude for past assistance is quickly dispersed in a sea of complaints about quality, promptness, and unmet requirements.

Regime Support. The Soviet Navy is well suited to capitalize on the insecurity that often typifies Third World regimes. In Guinea, the Soviet Navy actually provided security services, patrolling nearby waters against raiders from outside the country and, on at least one occasion, capturing a group of dissidents and returning them to Guinean forces. Similarly, Soviet combatants have been sent to the Seychelles on several occasions, reportedly in response to requests from President Rene, who feared externally supported coups. Regime insecurity undoubtedly also plays a large part in cementing the close relationship between the USSR and South Yemen, whose Marxist-oriented leadership is weakened by endemic factional bickering and perceives threats from neighboring moderate states supported by the United States. Even the Tunisians apparently hoped that naval concessions granted to Moscow might lessen the threat they perceive from Libya.

Instability or fear provides the potential for new or expanded access in other states as well. In mid-1981, for example, heightened tensions between Syria and Lebanon led Damascus to permit Soviet aircraft to operate briefly from Syrian airfields—the first time that Soviet naval aircraft had deployed to land bases in the region since 1972. In cases like Madagascar or Mozambique, Western observers frequently point to the lack of regime stability as a possible avenue by which the Soviets may eventually secure naval privileges.

Soviet naval presence is unlikely to play a decisive role in the survival of a regime or in its protection from outside threats. In the Seychelles, for example, the presence of Tanzanian troops probably has been more important than that of Soviet warships. For other countries, such as Syria, the Soviet ships dispatched during a crisis represented less of a commitment than the regime would have liked. Nonetheless, where local forces are small and poorly equipped, even a small force belonging to a major power may seem awesome and the regime may perceive it as having made a real contribution. In the case of Guinea, increased access to important facilities was a direct result of Soviet support to the regime. The gratitude of the leadership may not result in wider Soviet access—as it has not in the Seychelles—but may increase Moscow's political capital with the leadership and be useful for future negotiation.[4]

Inhibitions of the Nonaligned. Ultimately, the extreme sensitivity of Third World countries concerning their nonaligned status appears to limit the potential

[4] A Soviet port visit in the fall of 1981—reportedly at Rene's request—may have been another example of the use of the Soviet Navy for regime support.

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for extensive foreign naval involvement, not only by the Soviets but by any major outside power. These countries do not want to be labeled "bases" or "clients" of either Great Power. (The level at which such concerns arise varies, of course, depending in large part on the overall political orientation of the Third World state.)

In most of the case studies, the host countries eventually came to view Soviet naval presence—either actual or potential—as inconsistent with their independence or nonalignment. Guinea, Tunisia, and Singapore acted to limit Soviet access to their facilities. One of the factors prompting Rene's decision in 1979 to limit calls to Victoria by all foreign naval ships was the adverse publicity that Soviet involvement in the Seychelles received in the West—publicity that could undercut the tourist trade, which is a major source of revenue.

Similarly, when Cape Verde officials were considering Soviet offers that included establishing a limited Soviet naval presence, they registered concern over the effect of such a presence on the country's image. This concern played a significant role in Cape Verde's eventual decision to accept assistance, instead, from France and Portugal. Even South Yemen, where there is no evidence of any effort to cut back Soviet naval activities, has taken pains to declare repeatedly that it is not a Soviet "base" and has turned aside Soviet requests for expanded access to facilities.

Of the states studied, Mauritius under the Ramgoolam government displayed the least embarrassment over occasional Soviet port visits and services to the ships that called, probably because the President was confident that the most important Western nations viewed his government as essentially pro-Western. He may also have seen Soviet visits as a way to reinforce his nonaligned status by balancing the far more extensive use of Mauritian facilities by the navies of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. The argument that Mauritian facilities were available to the navies of any friendly state may also have been useful against the government's domestic political opponents.

Escalation of specific regional tensions may encourage a nation to reevaluate the balance between its need for a show of Soviet support and its desire to preserve its image of independence. Such thinking probably prompted Syria's cooperaton with the USSR in a naval exercise in the summer of 1981, Libya's decision to expand its naval ties with Moscow, and the expanded presence of Soviet ships in and near Tartus this past summer. 25X1

Domestic political fears may at times outweigh concerns about a nation's nonaligned status. The Seychelles' President Rene, for example, may alter his policies on naval visits to secure a firmer Soviet commitment to protect his regime. Even then, however, most Third World leaders probably will clothe a minimum of concessions in the verbiage of nonalignment. 25X1

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Naval Interaction With Local Populations. Soviet naval presence tends to be low key by Western standards:

- Facilities are generally kept relatively small and austere; many services are provided by Soviet auxiliary ships or floating drydocks rather than by local concerns and shore facilities.

- Contact between naval personnel and local populations is limited.

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- Shore leave is restricted; small groups of sailors go ashore accompanied by petty officers to sightsee and make a few small purchases. Naval advisers and technicians stationed in the host country are segregated from the local community to the extent possible and frequently play down their military status. 25X1

This policy has both benefits and costs. On the one hand, by keeping fixed facilities to a minimum, we believe that the USSR tries to avoid embarrassing the host country's political leadership with a large, visible foreign military establishment. (Further, the floating

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support facilities can be easily removed if circumstances warrant.) On the other hand, the Soviet naval presence is of only limited value in creating good relations with the local population. Soviet exclusivity is often resented by the local population, which has little reason to value the benefits of the USSR's naval presence and many reasons to dislike the lifestyle of Soviet personnel stationed ashore.

For the most part, the Soviet Navy does not capitalize effectively on the public relations aspects of port visits; the Soviets probably are too security conscious to do so. In spite of frequent Soviet references to the sailor as an ambassador of goodwill, the Soviets probably are more interested in influencing political elites than the population of the countries they visit. As a result, Soviet ships are seldom open to the public, and when they are, access to most parts of the ships is prohibited.

Soviet sailors have little money to spend and, while their empty pockets and close supervision may protect them from some of the worst errors of Western navy men, local shopkeepers value their visits accordingly. The contrast between the regimented Soviets and the free-spending and freewheeling Westerners is noted wherever both visit; in relatively free societies such as Singapore, Mauritius, and the Seychelles, it seems generally to redound to the credit of the West. Even in an austere and authoritarian society such as Guinea, US diplomatic officials have reported that US ship visits were a welcome change from those of the Soviets. By restricting contacts between Soviet naval personnel and local populations, however, the Soviets do avoid situations that might offend the citizens of poor countries with different cultural and ethical standards.

Fears of the Host Government. Most Third World countries are concerned about the security threat posed by a Soviet presence.

Soviets are generally watched carefully and attempts are made to control their activities. Incidents such as Singapore's expulsion of a Soviet shipyard official in early 1982 on espionage charges serve to reinforce such fears. In two cases—Guinea and Mauritius—there was real concern that the Soviet naval presence might in some way aid opposition elements. Conakry feared that the Guinean military was being subverted by the Soviet presence and acted to expel Soviet advisers, probably with the acquiesence of the Guinean Navy. In Mauritius, security concerns focused on rumors of Soviet naval involvement in financing the major opposition to Ramgoolam's government.

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Economic Incentives. The economic incentives associated with Soviet naval presence are of mixed value to both Moscow and the host state. Soviet military assistance—both grants or concessional sales of naval equipment and assistance with modernization or construction of port and air facilities—can provide a direct and significant economic benefit to Third World countries. In most cases, there is no real alternative to Soviet assistance; the countries receive naval vessels, weapons, training, and facilities they could not otherwise afford. The role of arms supplier, even if not immediately associated with naval privileges—as it was not in Libya and has not been in Madagascar—is an option for the future. Nevertheless—as the Guinean and Somali cases illustrate—the economic benefits, and even continued dependence for spare parts and repair assistance, do not seem to be sufficient to guarantee the Soviets continued access over the long term.

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Soviet port visits, whether continuous or intermittent, do not appear to generate enough income to make them a major factor in the local economy. In countries such as Guinea and South Yemen, where many Soviet ships call and some stay for long periods of time, the Soviets apparently do not pay full commercial fees for use of pier space and other facilities—a factor that tends to create hostility rather than good feeling. In these two countries, most repairs to Soviet ships are accomplished by Soviet technicians working out of naval auxiliaries, so little economic benefit—or technical spillover—results. In other countries, the Soviets insist that all work inside their ships be done by their own workmen—with somewhat the same result. A facility like Ethiopia's Dahlak Island—which is currently the major support center for the Indian Ocean

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Squadron—is operated by the Soviets themselves and provides almost no input to Ethiopia's economy. Moreover, Moscow's consistent refusal to help nations like India or Algeria develop an indigenous repair capability for their Soviet-built units—which would be of economic benefit—is a source of friction.

Although the provision of repair and overhaul services may generate more economically significant benefits, these do not seem sufficient to decisively influence policies of interest to the Soviets. Tunisian officials maintain that their decision to allow the overhaul of Soviet naval ships in the Menzel Bourguiba shipyard at Bizerte was based wholly on the economic benefits and that the Soviet business remains "vital" to the continued existence of the naval shipyard. Tunisia, however, decided in 1979 not to allow the repair of any more Soviet submarines. Singapore, too, welcomed Soviet naval use of its underutilized repair facilities but has now temporarily refused further access to its dockyards for Soviet naval ships. In both cases, these actions were taken for larger political purposes, and there is no evidence that the economic losses involved were a key issue in the decisions.

Outlook

If the USSR continues to expand its naval deployments to distant areas, it may change its attitude regarding the acquisition and use of foreign facilities. On the whole, however, we expect that the Soviets will continue to be circumspect in their search for foreign facilities and unwilling to pay a high political cost to obtain or to keep them.

On the basis of the patterns shown in the case studies, it is unlikely that the Soviets will establish large-scale support facilities in any Third World state in the near future. They will continue to develop those already in existence, but not as "bases" as the US Navy understands the term. They will continue their naval calls and aircraft deployments to Libya so long as Qadhafi permits. They are unlikely, however, to concentrate much of their Mediterranean Squadron logistics in Libya because of Qadhafi's wariness and their own uncertainty concerning his intentions. Moscow will probably cooperate with the new government in Mauritius to exclude Western navies from Port Louis and to intensify its campaign against the US base on Diego Garcia. The Soviets will take any concessions they can trade for their support of President Rene in the Seychelles. They might divert some of the repair work of the Indian Ocean Squadron to Diego Suarez (Madagascar) in the unlikely event that they can gain access there and may use Sri Lanka to compensate for the restricted access to Singapore's shipyards. The Soviets' effort to maintain a naval presence in both North and South Yemen may be set back if tensions between the two increase. Moscow may increase its efforts to return naval reconnaissance aircraft to Conakry and probably will continue to show the flag intermittently at other West African ports. Throughout the Third World, however, we believe that efforts by the Soviets to use their naval presence will continue to be undercut by Moscow's own predispositions against formal bases and by the sensitivities of potential hosts.

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Appendix

The Case Studies

West Africa

Cape Verde

Summary

The USSR has made little headway in securing a naval presence in Cape Verde. Moscow has many ties with Praia—including a continuing role as Cape Verde's chief arms supplier—but has not yet been able to parlay them into naval or air access. The Soviet Navy has made only two port calls to Cape Verde, both in 1979, and future visits are likely to be very limited—in part because of the continuing deficiencies of the major ports.

Moscow has tried to play on Cape Verde's maritime interests to get a foot in the door. An American Embassy evaluation notes that the Soviets have offered to help with port improvement in return for the use of naval facilities. According to the American Charge, they have tried to negotiate a fisheries agreement with Praia and have proposed cooperative air patrols of Cape Verde's extensive fishing zones.

Soviet initiatives have been unsuccessful primarily because of President Pereira's firm commitment to nonalignment. Pereira has supported revolutionary groups in Africa, such as the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and did permit Cuban troops en route to Angola to use Cape Verde's airfield—much to the dismay of the West. But he has also taken steps to signal that Cape Verde is not in the Soviet camp, such as requesting French and Portuguese help with maritime air patrols. Although Pereira must contend with a domestic pro-Soviet faction, so long as he is in power, Cape Verde is likely to continue its balancing act and reject the establishment of a Soviet naval presence.

For both the USSR and the West, Cape Verde's major attraction is its location. The 10 islands that form the republic cover a 300-km horseshoe off the coast of West Africa (see figure 3). They are on the primary sea lanes between Europe and the Persian Gulf–Indian Ocean area and are well situated to support ASW operations and maritime reconnaissance covering the approaches to the Mediterranean. Access to Cape Verde's port and air facilities also would place Soviet resources nearer to US operating areas in the central Atlantic. 25X1

Background: Relations Between Cape Verde and the USSR

At first glance, Cape Verde would appear to be an ideal target for Soviet penetration, and some Western observers have repeatedly raised alarms concerning this threat. The country is severely underdeveloped because of an almost total lack of natural resources and the devastating effects of an 11-year drought. Cape Verde has ties to the USSR that date to the early 1960s when the Soviets first became involved in the joint independence struggle of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. Throughout the war for independence, the Soviet Union was the primary source of military and political support and still supplies arms to Cape Verde. Cape Verde also developed ties to the Soviet-backed independence groups in Africa, particularly the MPLA. During the Angolan civil war, Cape Verde served as a stopover point for Cuban soldiers airlifted to Africa, and military-related flights between Cuba and Angola continue to stop in Cape Verde. 25X1 25X1 25X1

Relations between the Soviet Union and Cape Verde, however, have not developed wholly to Soviet satisfaction. A number of factors have worked against Soviet expectations:

- Cape Verde's economy has been almost totally dependent on Western economic aid and remittances from the large emigre communities in the West. 25X1

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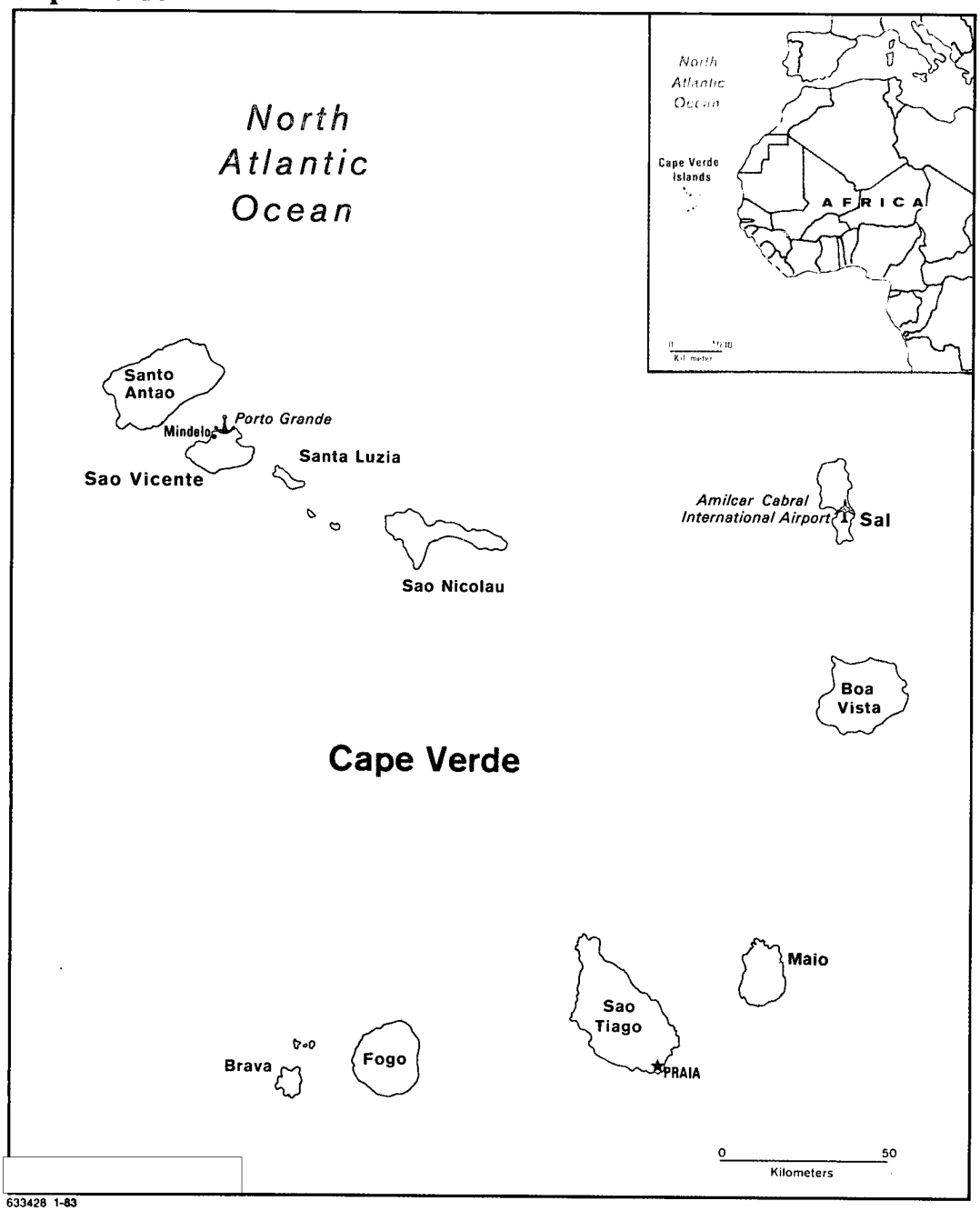
Figure 3
Cape Verde



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- The heritage of colonial status has conditioned Cape Verde against accepting a new overlord, either through arms dependence or political alliance.

- The ruling party in Cape Verde, the PAIGC (Marxist African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde),[6] has been less doctrinaire in power than its revolutionary rhetoric has indicated. Since independence, Cape Verde has specifically rejected the "Marxist-Leninist path of development."

- US Embassy cables evaluating a communique to President Carter and President Pereira's remarks during private conversations state that Cape Verde has become increasingly concerned about the apparent permanence of Cuban forces in Africa. Such concern has not led to disruption of Cuban–Cape Verde relations but has caused incidents demonstrating Cape Verde's dissatisfaction with the Cuban role, such as delaying the accreditation of the Cuban Ambassador to Praia (September 1979).

We believe these factors have reinforced President Pereira's commitment to nonalignment. Pereira appears well aware of the danger of close ties with the USSR—both in terms of potential domination and alienation of Western economic donors—and he is unlikely to permit Cape Verde to veer from the nonaligned path as long as he continues to control the PAIGC.

There has been a pro-Soviet element in Cape Verde's internal politics, but it has insufficient strength to force any change in Cape Verde's foreign policy. According to cables from the US Embassy, a faction of the party leadership—which at one time included former Minister of Defense Silviano da Luz—has argued for a redirection of Cape Verde's foreign policy to include closer ties to the Soviet Bloc. Although the faction included members of the defense and security establishments, its influence has been limited by the high prestige of President Pereira. For his part, da Luz—now the Minister of Foreign Affairs—seems to have shifted to a more pragmatic line on the issue of balancing Cape Verde's sources of military assistance.

[6] Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde were jointly governed until early 1981.

Naval Facilities

Cape Verde's main port is Porto Grande on Mindelo. Although the port has ample protected anchorage, it has very little berthing space for deep-draft vessels. The port facilities, built in 1959, show the effects of neglect, including the lack of modern cargo-handling equipment. Even bunkering trade has fallen off because of the competition of other West African ports, down to 90,000 tons annually from 700,000 tons in the 1950s. Numerous underwater obstructions hamper the port's use for commercial purposes. Mindelo's most significant drawback is the virtual absence of fresh water. Among improvement projects under way is a USAID desalinization plant; however, the lack of natural fresh water will limit the provision of supply to ships calling at Mindelo, at least until the plant is completed.

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The harbor at Praia on Sao Tiago currently is being developed to handle oceangoing traffic. Included in the renovations are structural repairs of the new pier and the installation of cargo-handling equipment. When the upgrading is complete, Praia will complement Mindelo. There are also minor ports on five of the other islands, but they are in serious disrepair and capable only of serving local needs.

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For maritime reconnaissance, Cape Verde has only Amilcar Cabral Airport on Sal. This jet runway was built in 1969 to service commercial aircraft flying between South Africa and Europe or the United States. The airport can handle jumbo jets and therefore would be sufficient for both long- and short-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft. Amilcar Cabral Airport gained international recognition during 1975-76 when thousands of Cubans were flown through Cape Verde to support the civil war in Angola. Cape Verde, aware of Western concern about the flights, justified the heavy Cuban traffic in terms of a 1976 civil transport agreement with Cuba. President Pereira maintained the fiction that the Cuban passengers were civilians because Cape Verde was firmly committed to the MPLA and because Cape Verde needed the revenue from Cuba's air traffic. Amilcar Cabral Airport continues to serve the civilian air routes to Africa at a level of about 50 flights per

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week, and Pereira tries to keep the landing rights question clear of political issues (such as movement of Cuban personnel to and from Africa or flights to South Africa).

Maritime Relations Between Cape Verde and the USSR

The USSR does not have a naval presence in Cape Verde. The naval relations between the two countries consist of a series of Soviet overtures to secure naval access or to tie naval affairs to other aspects of the political dialogue.

Port Calls. Port calls have become part of Soviet initiatives to Praia only recently. The first combatant visit took place in August 1979 and was followed by a second in November. No warships have visited since then. Showing the flag in Cape Verde is unlikely to be a consistent part of Soviet naval operations because of Praia's current inability to support major naval visits. Completion of port improvements could lead to an increase in Soviet port calls.

Naval Aid. The USSR has donated as much naval equipment as Cape Verde can absorb. In 1978 Cape Verde was given a P-6 torpedo boat and a 45-foot patrol boat (Kometta class). The larger craft was attached to the fledgling Navy, rather than to the merchant marine as the Soviets had expected.

the vessel apparently is confined to port because of engine and fuel problems. In March 1979, the Soviets gave Cape Verde the first of three promised Shershen-class torpedo boats. These gave Cape Verde's Navy a limited capability to patrol its 200-mile territorial zone. The Shershen boats provided the USSR with a limited future link through the provision of fuel oil and training of crews in the USSR. None of these naval transfers has been significant enough to provide positive naval entree for the USSR. Cape Verde's inability to absorb more sophisticated units probably will prevent successful use of naval transfers as a source of influence for some time to come.

Maritime Patrol Assistance. Maritime patrol is a serious issue for Cape Verde. Neither her Navy nor Air Force is capable of patrolling the extensive fishing zone. The Soviets have tried to exploit this weakness by offering Cape Verde three aircraft and pilot training. The US Embassy in Praia reported that President Pereira was not satisfied with the terms of the offer and turned to the West for assistance. As reported by the US defense attache in Dakar, he requested that France include Cape Verde in the patrols made by its Dakar-based aircraft. After a year's delay, France undertook to perform the patrols as requested. For its part, Portugal agreed to station two patrol aircraft on Sal Island. Rejection of the Soviet offer and subsequent request for French and Portuguese assistance is in line with Pereira's efforts to reaffirm Cape Verde's nonaligned status.

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Fishing Agreement. Through its claim of a 200-mile territorial sea, Cape Verde controls a substantial fishing zone. Although Cape Verde is not capable of fully exploiting its fisheries, the government envisions expansion of the fisheries sector as a major part of economic development. Fishing now accounts for half of domestic exports, and Cape Verde does not want to surrender its right to future catches.

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The USSR has proposed a fisheries agreement on a number of occasions. In August 1979, the fisheries prosposal was tied to an offer of military equipment and training but was refused. Most recently, in May 1980 a Soviet negotiator spent two weeks in Praia and again left emptyhanded. This particular visit was colored by the port call of a Soviet fish factory ship, which contrary to Soviet intentions, may have raised the specter of depletion of Cape Verde's fishing grounds. As long as the USSR continues to press for an unreasonable portion of Cape Verde's catch, it is unlikely that the Soviets will secure naval presence via a fisheries agreement.

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Port Development Aid. The USSR has not provided economic assistance to Cape Verde but has focused on military assistance as the most fruitful field. In August 1979 the Soviets offered to finance the development of four ports on the lesser islands, but work has yet to begin. The proposed improvements included construction of quays for use by the fishing fleet. It

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seems likely that this first Soviet promise of economic assistance was intended to support Soviet pressure for a fisheries agreement.

Formal Naval Access. In addition to efforts to build maritime ties, the Soviets have openly requested base rights. In November 1978, Soviet concern over future access to Guinea prompted a move to secure alternate facilities in Cape Verde. The Soviet request was denied with high-level statements that Cape Verde would not permit any foreign bases on its territory. The Soviet bid for naval access was renewed in August 1979 in conjunction with the port improvement agreement and again in December 1979 in connection with an offer to build a new port at Sao Vicente. Neither of these requests was accepted, and we believe Pereira remains firmly committed to the denial of foreign bases as part of nonalignment.

Refusal to yield to Soviet pressure in these cases has not marked a turn away from the USSR, however. Rather, it is part of a pattern of adherence to nonalignment, a pattern not always pleasing to the West. In mid-1978, for example, Pereira decided to establish a military structure independent of Guinea-Bissau. Capitalizing on her arms supply role, the USSR increased her advisers in Cape Verde from 25 to 60 over a period of several months and made a series of arms deliveries. These developments coincided with the flow of Cuban troops to Angola via Cape Verde. Western nations were concerned about the apparent increase in Soviet influence as well as about the danger that the flow of arms would undercut economic development proposals and precipitate internal instability. Given expressions of Western concern, as well as increasing uneasiness about the Cuban presence in Africa, Pereira attempted to placate the West without losing the benefits of Soviet arms aid. Pereira moved to strengthen his internal power base and made the decision to request French and Portuguese maritime assistance. Similarly, Pereira apparently hesitated to take a planned trip to Moscow because of his disapproval of Soviet activities in Afghanistan.

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Naval Prospects

The Soviets are unlikely to be able to secure a naval presence in Cape Verde. None of Pereira's decisions have been part of a break with the USSR or a shift to the West. Following the coup in Guinea-Bissau in November 1980—which disrupted Cape Verde's close ties with its mainland partner—Pereira did indicate his desire to improve relations with the West, but such moves will not be at the expense of continued ties with the USSR or Soviet Bloc nations. Cape Verde's ties with Cuba will continue, both through the nonaligned movement and through Cuban aid projects, such as the upgrading of Amilcar Cabral Airport. Relations with Warsaw Pact states will be pursued through Cape Verde's East Berlin Embassy. The Soviets will continue to use any available leverage to press for naval access. President Pereira has shown, however, that he is wary of Soviet designs and is capable of controlling the domestic forces that push for a wider relationship with the USSR.

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Guinea

Summary

In Guinea, the Soviet Navy played a direct role in forging close ties and building Soviet influence. The Soviet Navy has maintained a permanent ship presence in Guinea since 1970, and from 1973 to 1977 Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft operated from Conakry airfield, flying surveillance missions against US ships transiting the North Atlantic. The Soviets have provided substantial assistance to the Guinean Navy, including ships and technical assistance for training and maintenance.

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Nevertheless, the Soviet naval presence has often been an irritant in the relationship between the two countries, adding to other, more important pressures—such as the ineffectiveness of Soviet economic and

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technical aid—rather than alleviating them. President Sekou Toure welcomed the Soviet naval presence in Guinea when he felt insecure domestically and tensions were high between Guinea and several of its West African neighbors. As the tensions and insecurity faded during the mid-1970s, the Soviet presence increasingly was viewed as a burden rather than a resource.

In 1977 Toure canceled Soviet access for TU-95 Bear D reconnaissance aircraft; in late 1978 most Soviet military advisers were sent home; and in early 1979 new restrictions were imposed on the movements of Soviet ships in Conakry harbor. Throughout the decade, the Guineans resisted Soviet offers to build for them a well-developed naval base, a portion of which would be dedicated to Soviet use.

It is not clear to what extent these limitations on Soviet access have contributed to the decline in Soviet naval deployments to the region and in the number and length of Soviet ship visits to Conakry. It may be that the drop in deployments has resulted from a decline in Soviet interest in the region, as Soviet attention was focused on conflicts elsewhere in the world during 1979 and 1980. On the other hand, it is possible that the Soviets' inability to maintain unimpeded access to the port and airfield at Conakry and to develop more substantial support facilities in Guinea has frustrated what might have been larger Soviet plans for the region.

Recurrent domestic unrest in the past two years may bring about a tightening of the frayed Soviet connection and a resurgence in the Soviet naval presence. The regime is not unified behind the policy of distancing Guinea from the USSR. On balance, however, Toure and many among his leadership now appear to view the Soviets as a major part of their problems—particularly the economic situation—and have ceased to see Soviet assistance as the potential solution.

Background: The Relationship Between Guinea and the USSR

From the time Guinea became independent from France in 1958, the USSR had focused attention and large amounts of military and developmental assistance on Sekou Toure's revolutionary government, and the Soviets came to view Guinea as one of the most "progressive" states in Africa. Yet the relationship between the two was characterized by considerable friction, resulting from Toure's prickly independence and Soviet clumsiness. By 1970 two Soviet Ambassadors had been expelled for meddling in internal politics, and tensions had mounted over the cancellation by Guinea of a substantial Soviet agricultural project and Soviet violations of its fishing agreement with Guinea.

In November 1970, following two raids by commandos from neighboring Portuguese Guinea—then a Portuguese colony—Soviet naval ships deployed to Guinea in response to an appeal from President Toure. The abortive Portuguese-sponsored raid heightened Toure's sense of vulnerability to internal and external forces, and over the next few years the USSR was able to play on that vulnerability. The Soviet Navy established a patrol in West African waters, centered in Conakry, and the USSR reestablished its position as the preeminent foreign influence in the government of Guinea.

Naval Facilities

Conakry is the only port in Guinea capable of handling international commercial traffic or major naval ships (see figure 4). Berths are available for about three large oceangoing ships and five smaller ones, and there is a large sheltered anchorage with depths of 11 to 15 meters. Parts of the harbor are shallow and subject to silting. Perishable provisions and water are available, but there are no bunkering facilities.

Soviet ships normally moor at a quay in Conakry that belongs to the Soviet bauxite mining concern. They also anchor in the roadstead (an offshore area with good holding ground and some protection from the sea) outside Conakry harbor, partly to avoid the crowding of the commercial port facilities and possibly because they are less visible there. The ships frequently anchor in the sheltered waters off Tamara Island and the Kassa Islands.

The Soviets have used the workshops of the joint bauxite concern for making minor repairs, fabricating some spare parts, and storing essential spares. Additional spares and other supplies have been shipped in

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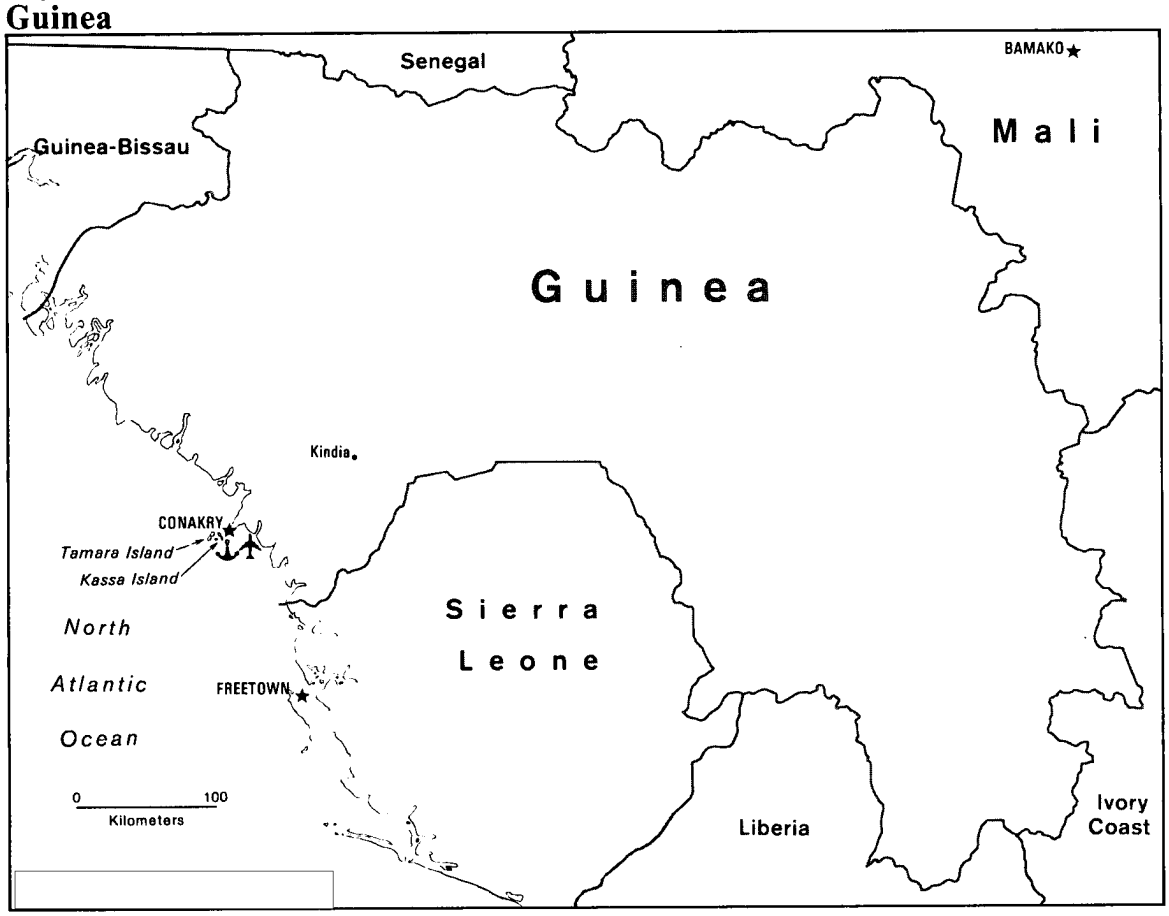
Figure 4
Guinea



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from the USSR and stored in the Conakry area. Limited repairs can be performed by the Soviet mechanics assigned as advisers to the Guinean Navy, but more complicated work requires a special visit by a repair ship, thus involving lengthy delays.

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the Soviets as early as 1971 made one of their repeated offers to build a new naval base on Tamara Island,[7] which lies about 13 kilometers west of Conakry. The proposals evidently included the construction of two facilities, one for the use of the Guinean Navy and the other for Soviet use.

The US Embassy in Conakry notes that Toure has consistently opposed such an arrangement on the grounds that an exclusive Soviet base would encroach upon Guinean sovereignty and compromise its nonaligned posture.

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[7] Development of Tamara Island into a naval base would involve extensive dredging, because the waters there are too shallow to accommodate large ships. The facilities currently on Tamara Island consist of an old bauxite loading dock.

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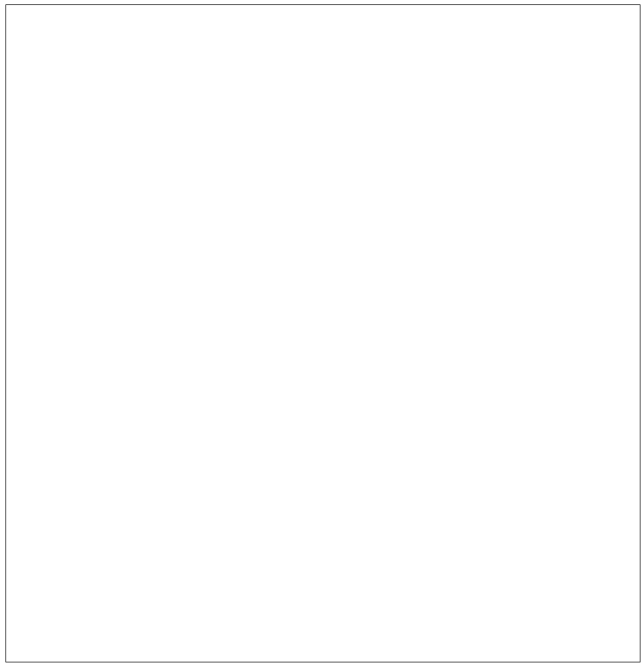

Soviet Use of Guinean Facilities

Early Deployments. Soviet naval visits to Guinea began in 1969; two groups consisting of destroyers and submarines made formal "show the flag" calls during that year, and three space event support ships called during 1970 in the months before the commando attacks.

During the next year—until September 1971—there were additional deployments to the area. Most of these ships called in Conakry during their tours of duty, but these deployments differed from later ones. The ships spent far more time at sea, evidently patrolling the waters off Bissau, the capital of then Portuguese Guinea. Port calls were brief and unpublicized. When in Conakry, the ships were docked unobtrusively. Replenishment often took place at sea.

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By September the Soviets evidently had decided that requirements—and opportunities—in the area called for a more permanent, visible presence. The "West African Patrol" was established as a continuous activity, and its character changed. After September 1971, the ships that were sent to the Gulf of Guinea were mostly inactive, visiting Conakry and other littoral ports for long periods of time, neither patrolling nor exercising, and operating only while moving from one port to another. In Conakry, the ships became more visible; one combatant often was docked in clear sight of the Presidential Palace. An amphibious ship, with naval infantry personnel and vehicles aboard, became a regular part of the contingent. From this time on, data provided by the Naval Ocean Surveillance Information Center on West African deployments indicate that virtually all of the ships sent to West Africa were detailed directly from their fleets for several months' duty.

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It is our judgment that the reasons for these changes were twofold. Toure's security fears had begun to focus increasingly on internal as opposed to external threats, and a visible Soviet presence in port was relevant to those concerns. In addition, continual ad hoc deployments to the area must have imposed operational hardships on the Soviet Navy, diverting ships from patrol duties in the Strait of Gibraltar and drawing down forces in the Mediterranean. Routine

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Table 1
Soviet Naval Ship Visits to Guinea

	Overall Ship-days in West African Waters	Ships Arriving in Conakry	Combatants/ Auxiliaries/ Research Ships	Ship-Days in Conakry	Average Duration of Stay (*days*)	Number of ships Staying more Than 20 days
1970	220	7	3/1/3	57	8	NA
1971	824	26	14/9/3	339	13	4
1972	988	52	30/20/2	535	10	4
1973	839	37	19/17/1	358	12	5
1974	1,354	32	9/18/5	880	26	13
1975	987	27	10/17/0	573	23	9
1976	1,785	50	21/27/2	1,058	22	14
1977	3,595	67	23/35/9	1,375	23	23
1978	4,110	76	21/35/20	1,414	15	12
1979	3,049	49	19/26/4	913	19	11
1980	2,693	40	16/22/2	685	17	9
1981	1,596	33	14/16/3	319	10	3

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programing of ships for duties in West African waters probably seemed increasingly sensible to Soviet Navy planners.

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Formal Naval Access. In spite of extensive Soviet assistance to Guinea and use of its facilities, the two countries have not concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. In late 1971, following the establishment of a permanent presence in and near Conakry, a high-ranking Soviet military delegation visited Guinea to request the use of Guinean facilities and to negotiate a formal agreement establishing Soviet rights. President Sekou Toure is reported publicly to have rejected the Soviet request sharply, lecturing the visiting delegation on his country's independence and the meaning of nonalignment.

Soviet officials later indicated to the US Charge that they were satisfied with the "de facto" rights they enjoyed—virtually unlimited access to Conakry for Soviet naval ships.

A Maturing Naval Presence. Table 1 and figures 5 and 6 portray Soviet naval presence in West African waters and in Conakry from 1970-80, and show how that presence changed over the decade. From 1972 through 1976, Soviet ships deployed to West Africa spent a large portion of their time in Conakry harbor—more than 50 percent in all but one year and almost 60 percent during 1975 and 1976. By 1974 some Soviet ships were staying in Conakry for many months at a time, and an amphibious ship and one or more oilers were present almost continuously.

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Figure 5
Soviet Naval Presence in West African Waters

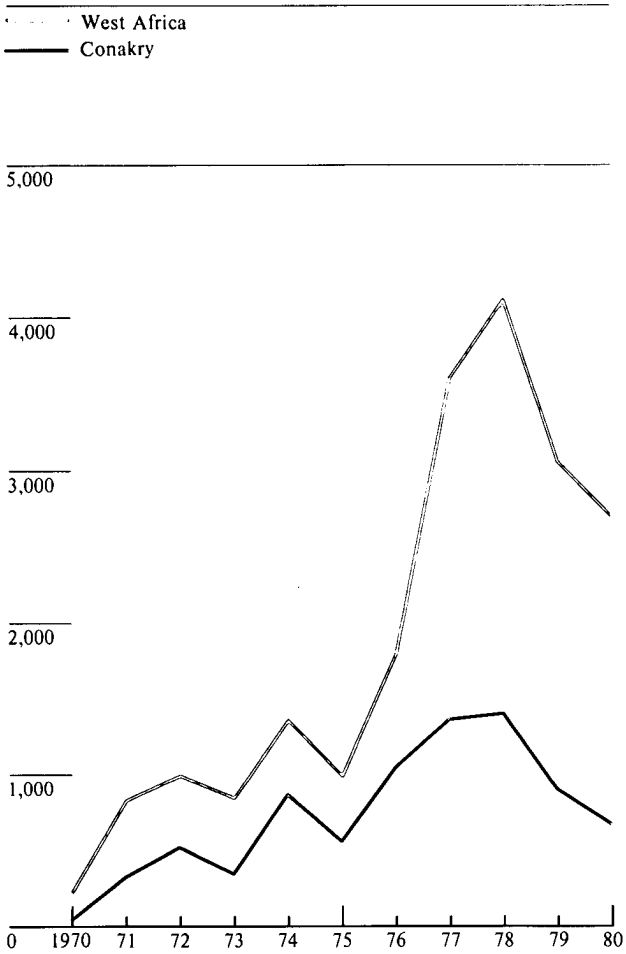

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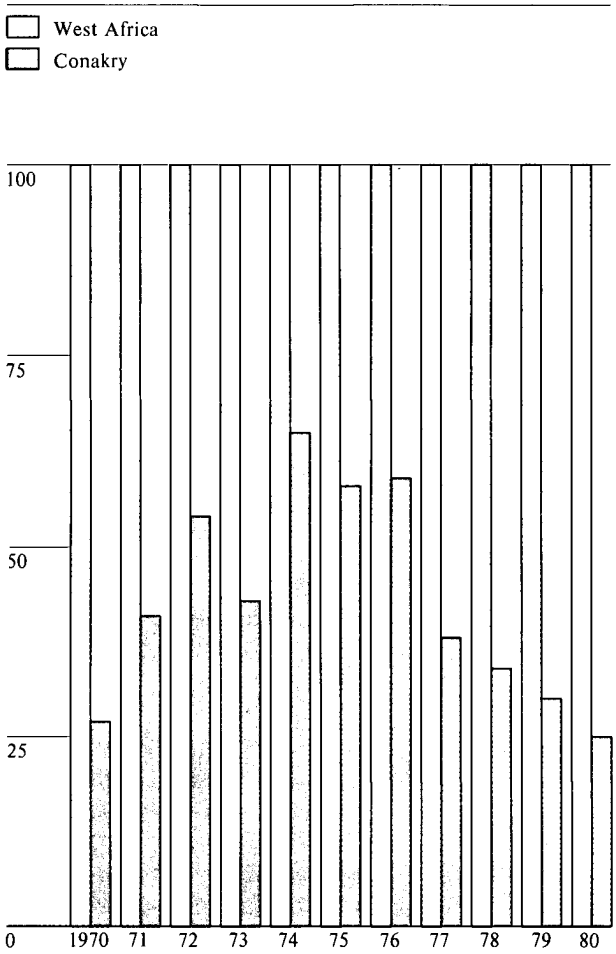
Figure 6
Ship-days in Conakry as a Percent of Days Spent in West African Waters



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In January 1976, during the airlift and sealift of materiel to the Soviet-backed faction in the Angolan civil war, the Soviet Navy augmented its naval forces in the region—probably to protect Soviet and Cuban shipping and demonstrate support for the MPLA, and, possibly, to discourage Western military involvement. Clearly, Soviet access to Guinea made these deployments easier and may even have been essential to the Soviets. All of these ships, including a Kresta II cruiser and a J-class diesel-powered guided-missile submarine, were replenished in Conakry. From this time on, a guided-missile destroyer became a regular feature of the Conakry contingent, and there were seldom fewer than three or four Soviet ships present.

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Soviet deployments to West African waters more than doubled in 1977 and 1978 over previous levels, and the numbers of ships visiting Conakry remained high, but Conakry lost its unique role in the support of West African operations. The percentage of time that ships on patrol in West African waters spent in Conakry dropped back steadily during 1977-80. Still, Conakry remained the regional home port for most Soviet combatants sent to West Africa.

There probably were at least two reasons for this change. Most important, access to Luanda, Angola provided an alternative port for regular calls, reducing the need for Conakry and shifting the center of gravity for the West African patrol. A second factor was the deterioration of Soviet-Guinean relations to the point that ship visits caused friction between the two governments.

Naval Air Deployments.

In June 1977, after assuring US officials for a year that he would refuse the Soviets further access to Guinean airfields for TU-95 flights, President Toure finally did so. Formal statements to the US Embassy in Conakry indicate that Toure was concerned about the attention the flights received and the threat they represented to his nonaligned image. Soviet use of Guinean facilities for military missions aimed at US forces also raised the prospect of Guinean involvement in a US-Soviet conflict. In addition, Toure may have hoped that he would receive some economic or military assistance from the United States and other Western countries if access for the reconnaissance flights was ended.

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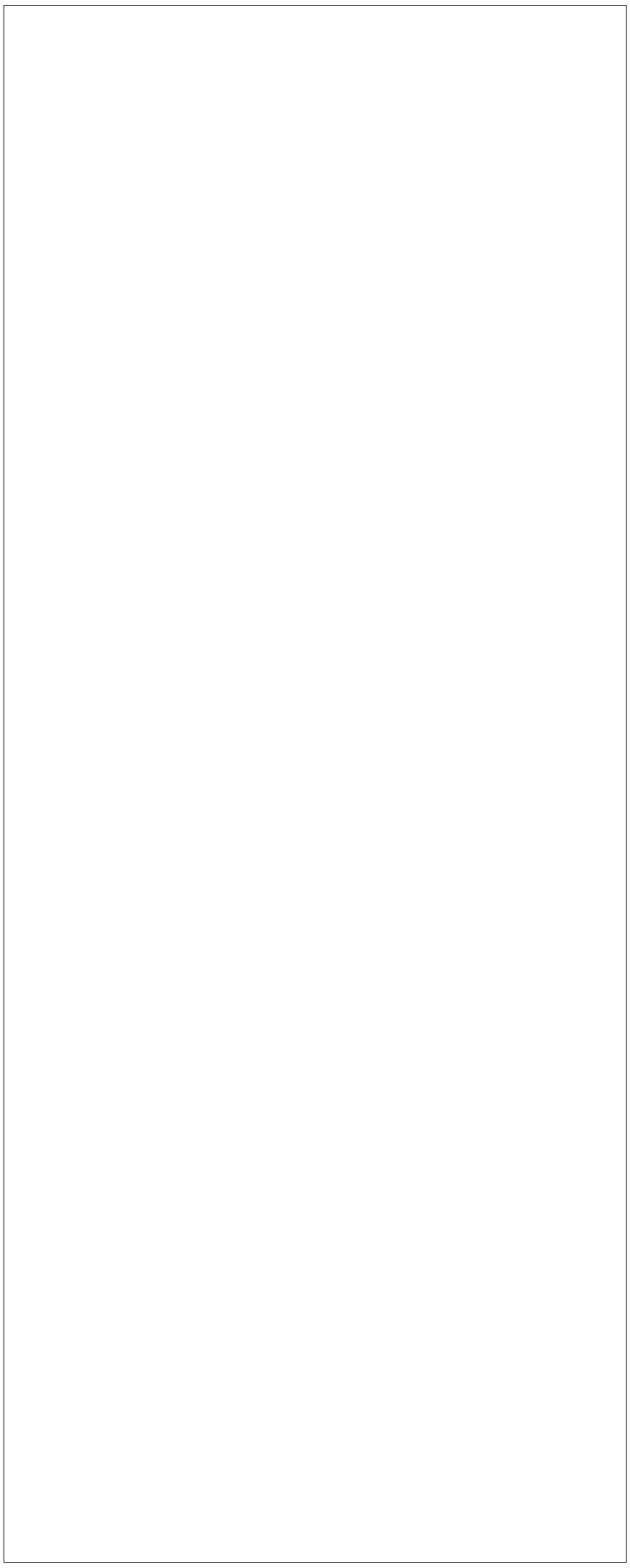

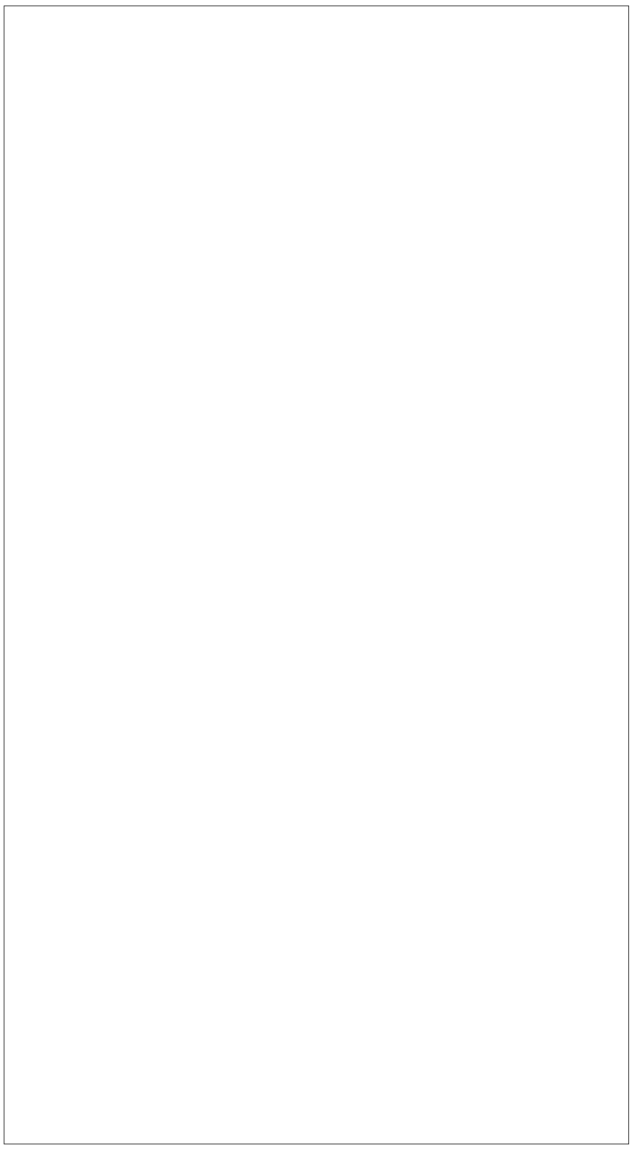

The Impact of the Soviet Naval Presence

Advantages for Conakry. The Soviet Navy has performed a number of functions useful to Guinea. Beginning with the Portugese-sponsored raids in 1970, Soviet ships repeatedly came to Guinea at Toure's request, at times abruptly altering scheduled movements to respond to his needs. In January 1973, following the assassination in Guinea of Amilcar Cabral,[9] a Soviet destroyer left the harbor to pursue

[9] The leader of the PAIGC—the Front for the Liberation of (Portuguese) Guinea and Cape Verde—who was then resident in Guinea.

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some of the dissidents associated with the attack, captured them, and turned them over to the Guinea Government.

The USSR has provided at low cost most of the ships that make up the Guinea Navy, including, in recent years, three old Shershen-class torpedo boats, a modified submarine chaser, and a T-43 patrol combatant. The delivery of the T-43 was eagerly awaited, and the ship was formally presented to Guinea in a July 1979 ceremony by a high-level Soviet delegation, with most of the Guinean leadership present. The ship was said to have been reconditioned and "completely tropicalized" for service in West African waters.

Opportunities to visit Soviet ships while in port have been infrequent, but tours have occasionally been given to groups of Guineans.

Since 1978 the scientific research vessel Mikhail Lomonosov has repeatedly taken groups of Guinean students to sea for several days of training. In September 1980 the new Soviet naval hospital ship, Ob, visited Conakry for 12 days, offering medical examinations and consultations to most of Guinea's military and political elite. During the 1970s, numerous parties were given to commemorate the departure of various naval ships or groups of personnel, and no doubt this hospitality has represented feelings of genuine friendship and gratitude. 25X1

But What Have You Done for Me Lately? Nevertheless, occasions for mutual irritation have also arisen with frequency; on balance, resentment seems to have outweighed gratitude in Guinean attitudes toward the Soviet presence. 25X1

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Guinean Efforts To Restrict the Soviet Presence. Eventually, Guinea's growing reputation as a Soviet base of operations and a loyal client clearly bothered Sekou Toure and many of his associates. An intimate relationship between Guinea and the USSR was reinvigorated in the early 1970s during a period when Guinea was threatened—or seemed to be—by internal and external forces. During the Angolan civil war in 1975-76, Guinean and Soviet objectives in the region coincided, and Toure probably was quite willing to have the Soviets use Guinean facilities for operations in support of those objectives. As the tensions between Guinea and its neighbors lessened, however, Toure's dependence upon the Soviets diminished, and Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa became a matter of concern rather than reassurance.

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the Soviet naval presence increasingly was regarded by the government of Guinea not as a resource but as a burden accepted

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because of the substantial Soviet military and civilian assistance. Guinean officials began to chafe under that presence.

First to go, in 1977, were the Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft. By mid-1978, there were rumors in the international diplomatic community that Toure had asked that the Soviet ships stationed in Conakry be withdrawn, although there is no evidence to confirm or deny that such a request was ever made. In late 1978, however, the Guinean Government did ask the Soviet Union to withdraw most of its military and civilian advisers. The Cuban advisory presence was concurrently reduced. Following the exodus in November 1978, probably no more than about two dozen advisers remained.

the reasons for the expulsion of the Soviets were many: grievances over the bauxite venture, fishing agreements, and other commercial arrangements played a significant role, as did high-level concern with the danger of subversion of the Guinean military. Most important, however, was Guinean frustration with a highly inefficient foreign expert presence—particularly significant in the area of economic development.

The Soviets seemed capable only of providing military assistance—and even that was perceived as less effective than the military equipment and training that could be obtained from Western countries.

At the time the advisers were sent home, there were reports that Guinea would terminate the Soviet naval ship presence by the end of the year, but no discernible changes in that presence followed.

Toure ordered that new instructions be promulgated to tighten control over the Soviet naval presence. The Soviets were to submit a written request to the Ministry of External Affairs 48 hours in advance of any ship arrival. Guinean officials were to supervise the movements of Soviet ships closely and to assign suitable anchorages or pier space.

Soviet port calls to Conakry have declined, but the restrictions may be only part of the reason for the presence of fewer ships.

During 1980 and 1981 there continued to be a coolness in Soviet-Guinean maritime relations.

complaints about the reliability of Soviet equipment and the lack of spare parts continued to be voiced, and professional ties between the two navies appeared to be quite limited.

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there was considerable difficulty in renegotiating the fishing agreement in early 1981, partly (according to US Embassy assessments) because of public complaints about Soviet overfishing.

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It is difficult to assess the impact that Toure's efforts to restrict Soviet access had on Soviet naval presence in Conakry. No publicity was ever given to the new policies, and there was no sharp or immediate drop in the number of Soviet ships visiting Guinea. The decline in the use of Conakry as opposed to other West African ports—such as Luanda—predates this period by more than a year (see figure 5). But the numbers of Soviet ships visiting Conakry and the average length of their stay continued to decline after the events of late 1978 and early 1979. Overall Soviet deployments to West African waters dropped off sharply in 1979, 1980, and 1981, a fact which probably reflects at least a temporary decline in the Soviet Union's emphasis on the area, particularly in view of crises and conflicts elsewhere in the world.

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The difficulties with Guinea may, however, have affected the Soviet Navy's ability or willingness to use Guinean facilities as much as it would have liked and therefore to maintain as many ships in the region as it would have preferred. The continued search for facilities in the northern part of West Africa—especially in Cape Verde—certainly argues for continued Soviet interest in access to facilities that would augment or replace those in Guinea. Facilities in Luanda, because they are so far south, are not a satisfactory replacement. It is at least possible, therefore, that the Soviets' difficulties in securing free access to the airfield and a well-developed naval support facility at Conakry have frustrated what were larger plans for the West African area.

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Evaluating the Role of the Navy in the Soviet-Guinean Relationship

Given the extensive ties between the USSR and Guinea, it is difficult to isolate the role played by the Soviet Navy in cementing relations with Guinea and influencing its domestic and foreign policy direction. On balance, however, the Soviet naval involvement in Guinea appears to have been an important element in the equation, both when relations were on the upswing and when they began to deteriorate.

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For a number of years—from 1970 through about 1976—the Soviet Navy was successful in promoting Guinean dependence on the USSR as well as a general identity of views on many questions. Toure seems to have relied upon the Soviet ships in Conakry to discourage opposition from inside or outside the country and to deal with such acts if necessary. By selling Guinea old ships and craft, the Soviets created a continuing need for spare parts, training, and repair services. Extensive Soviet technical and managerial assistance to both civilian and military agencies—including the Navy—built a dependence on the Soviets throughout the Guinean bureaucracy. Finally, during the Angolan civil war, the Soviets and Guineans cooperated to support the faction they both favored, with Guinea providing valuable facilities for Soviet ships and aircraft participating in the support operation.

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Nevertheless, Guinea's dependence was insufficient, once the two countries' interests diverged, to ensure the continuation of all of the USSR's privileges. At some point during the mid-1970s, as Toure's security concerns lessened, the considerable Soviet naval presence in Guinea became an irritant in the relationship. Moreover, Guineans began to chafe under their dependence on Moscow, particularly because Soviet economic, technical, and military assistance appeared less effective than what Guinea's neighbors were receiving from Western countries.

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A recurrence of domestic unrest could bring about a tightening of the frayed Soviet connection and a resurgence in Soviet naval presence. The regime is not unified behind the policy of distancing Guinea from the USSR. On balance, however, Toure and many of his followers now appear to view the Soviets as a major part of their problems—particularly the economic situation—rather than the potential solution to them.

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Indian Ocean

Mauritius

Summary

Soviet naval deployments to Mauritius have been relatively ineffective thus far in improving government-to-government relations between Mauritius and the USSR. However, with the departure of the pro-Western Ramgoolam government following the victory of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) in the June 1982 elections, it is likely that the USSR's overall influence in Mauritius will increase. Soviet naval presence—and naval-related policies on Diego Garcia and the Indian Ocean zone of peace (IOZP)[10]—will have played a small part in building a strong position for the USSR with the new government.

The Ramgoolam government tolerated occasional Soviet port calls to maintain its nonaligned image and to bring in needed foreign exchange, but the substantive benefits of the program to the USSR were limited to the support its ships received. Indeed, some naval activities, most notably the Soviet Navy's suspected role in providing financial support to the chief opposition party, were a constant source of friction between the governments. The new government has not yet taken any position on the question of Soviet naval access. The MMM is officially opposed to the presence of foreign navies in the Indian Ocean and, despite its ties to Moscow, may act to ban calls by foreign warships. Moscow probably will accept such a policy—as it did in the Seychelles—because of its concern for limiting Western naval access and its desire to maintain good relations with the new government.

Background: Relations Between Mauritius and the USSR

Soviet relations with the pro-Western Mauritian Government of Prime Minister Sir Seewoosagun Ramgoolam were correct, although not extensive or uniformly amicable. State-to-state contacts revolved for a decade around Soviet aid in developing a Mauritian fishing and fish-processing industry in return for limited supply and servicing of Soviet naval and merchant ships. Nevertheless, the USSR devoted considerable attention to this small island state. The Navy was a major instrument of Soviet diplomacy in Mauritius; its success was limited, but it may share credit for an improvement in the Soviet position now that the MMM has come to power. Soviet policy on the naval-related issues of the US facility on Diego Garcia and the Indian Ocean zone of peace, which was used to put pressure on the Ramgoolam government, probably will reinforce Soviet ties to the MMM. 25X1

Before Mauritian independence from Great Britain, Soviet contacts with Mauritians were limited to covert financial support for leftwing labor leaders, occasional 25X1 scholarships for study in the USSR, and occasional visits to Port Louis by Soviet merchant ships and space-associated naval auxiliaries. Mauritius was granted independence in March 1968, but almost a year passed before the USSR established diplomatic ties with the new state. Despite the lack of trade or 25X1 consular interest, however, the Soviet Union's Embassy staff soon was second in size only to Great Britain's.

During the first year of formal relations, the Soviets undertook a vigorous program of diplomatic initiatives. According to a State Department cable Ramgoolam told US officials that in March 1969 they approached the Mauritian Government, unsuccessfully, concerning landing rights for space support aircraft and permission to operate a space tracking station in Mauritius. In April of the same year, a Soviet combatant visited for the first time. An agreement 25X1 was reached in August 1969 under which the USSR would help establish a Mauritian fishing industry in exchange for Mauritian servicing of Soviet trawlers and research ships at Port Louis, and in September a cultural accord was signed. 25X1

The results of these initiatives, which we view as having been largely disappointing to both sides, established the pattern of relations throughout the next

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[10] The IOZP is a proposal for regional demilitarization introduced by Indian Ocean littoral states in the early 1970s. The concept has been supported by many Third World states in the United Nations and other international forums, but it has been something of a political football between the superpowers.

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decade. Repeated requests by the Soviets for space tracking facilities and military landing rights have repeatedly been denied. (The former government of Mauritius occasionally allowed US patrol aircraft to use Plaisance Airfield.) The Mauritians have also refused to grant the USSR permission to develop bunkering or other facilities at the largely dormant Grand Port, across the island from Port Louis. Occasional rumors that the former government might grant the Soviets a base on the island probably resulted from irritation with the way in which the United States and Britain have handled the development of Diego Garcia or may have been an effort to extract greater US and British support.

The Soviet-Mauritian fishing agreement, which has been a source of friction between the two states, was not renewed in 1979. Prior to 1979, dissatisfaction led the Mauritians to limit the scope of the agreement, whose renewal was often delayed by acrimonious domestic debate. During the early 1970s, the Mauritians reportedly considered the equipment provided by the Soviets as overpriced and obsolete, and Soviet technical assistance was characterized by a government official as "unrealistic and uneconomic." According to a US Embassy cable, in 1974 a Mauritian official noted that the Soviets were using the fisheries agreement for intelligence gathering, and in 1978 the Fisheries Minister publicly threatened to press for the closing of the Soviet Embassy if Soviet trawlers continued to overexploit Mauritian waters. Although unable to negotiate new fishing licenses, in April 1982 the Soviet Ministry of Fish Industry signed a contract with a newly formed Mauritian company to provide logistic support to fishing ships calling in Mauritius.

Unofficial Soviet activities in Mauritius constituted an important source of tension with the Ramgoolam leadership, but they may be the basis for successful relations with the current government. Soviet financial support to the MMM angered the Labor Party enough to contribute to the rejection of Soviet aid proposals. Moscow was aware that its ties to the MMM could backfire—possibly damaging the MMM's popularity

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The victory of Berenger's party in the June 1982 election almost guarantees that relations with Mauritius will improve, possibly providing the basis for an increase in the Soviet naval presence there.

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Naval Facilities

The major port in Mauritius, Port Louis, is among the best in the western Indian Ocean (see figure 7). It contains one of the largest ship repair facilities in the region. Nevertheless, Port Louis is congested and can offer only limited bunkering and repair services to large naval vessels. The Port Louis harbor is deep enough for all but the deepest draft Soviet vessels and is sheltered except during the hurricane season from December to April. There are two deepwater quays, one of which is dedicated to discharging and loading fertilizer, while the other is available to naval ships. Port Louis contains one berth for large ships, 10 for medium-size ships, and five for small ships. Water and marine diesel oil are available on a commercial basis. For ship repair, there is one drydock that can accommodate ships of up to 107 meters in length, with a 15.5-meter beam and a 3.6-meter draft—too small for cruisers or destroyers. Moreover, the Mauritians insist that all repairs be done by Mauritian labor—a requirement that might well discourage any Soviet naval use of the drydock, because the Soviets prefer to handle all interior work themselves.

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Grand Port, on the southeastern shore of Mauritius, was used by the United States and Britain during World War II but has fallen into disuse. It contains some oil storage installations and could conceivably be developed as a deepwater anchorage. While the UK-Mauritian defense treaty was in force, Great Britain

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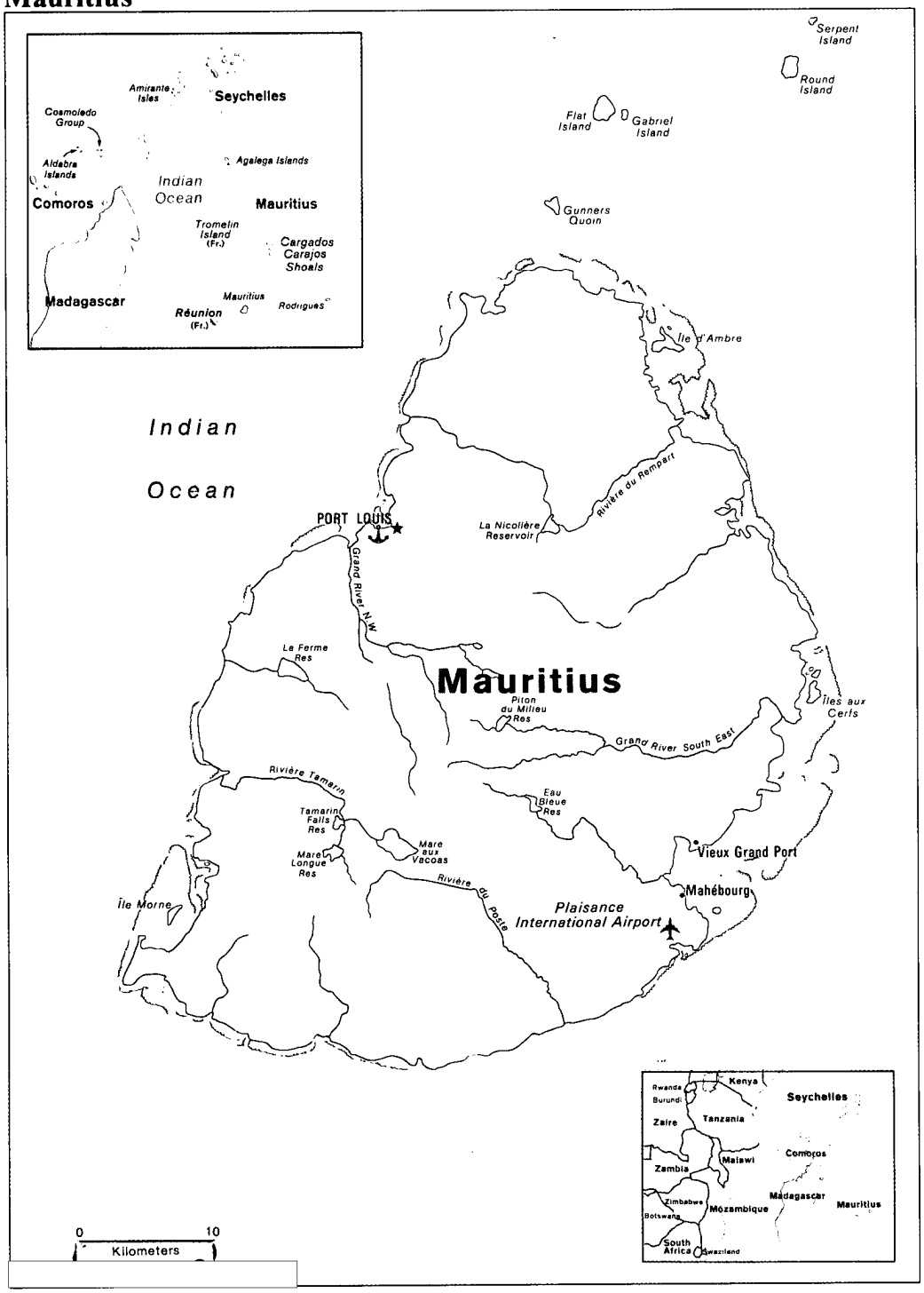
Figure 7
Mauritius



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had to approve any development of Grand Port. Since the expiration of the treaty in March 1976, the government of Mauritius has continued to refuse Soviet initiatives to establish naval facilities there. Plans for commercial development of Grand Port make it unlikely the harbor would be used for military purposes.

Plaisance Airport, 48 km from Port Louis, is an international airfield with a 2,600-meter runway. Aeroflot aircraft have used Plaisance to transport Soviet fishing crews, but no Soviet military aircraft have landed there.

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Soviet Use of Mauritian Facilities

Several Soviet naval ships have called at Mauritius every year since the country became independent in 1968 (see table 2). Visits normally last about a week, and the ships usually take on water and provisions but not fuel. Naval hydrographic ships and space event support ships have made up a sizable proportion of the visiting ships, but once or twice a year Soviet combatants have made formal port calls, often in conjunction with Mauritian Independence Day celebrations. A typical visiting task force numbers two to four ships, including a cruiser or destroyer. Combatant visits rose sharply in 1979, when the Kiev-class VTOL carrier Minsk and elements of its task force called twice at Mauritius while operating in the Indian Ocean en route to their home port in the Pacific. The Minsk was accompanied during these visits by a Kara-class cruiser and the Ivan Rogov, a new amphibious assault ship. The 17 calls by Soviet naval ships during 1979 placed Port Louis third among Indian Ocean ports, after Dahlak Island (Ethiopia) and Aden (South Yemen). The 1979 level of visits clearly was an anomaly, however, standing out from the lower level of visits during 1977-78 and 1980-81.

Mauritian permission for official port calls has tended to reflect the overall state of relations with the USSR and—at times—Mauritian pique over Soviet actions. In 1980, for example, the Soviets requested permission for their standard official port call in connection with Mauritian Independence Day in March.

Table 2
Soviet Naval Visits to Mauritius

	Number of Ships	Ship-Days Spent in Mauritius
1968	8	Unknown
1969	15	89
1970	23	137
1971	12	52
1972	26	154
1973	12	85
1974	15	84
1975	11	84
1976	11	63
1977	7	45
1978	3	19
1979	17	70
1980	5	37
1981	8	34

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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence

Building Domestic Influence. There are no Soviet naval personnel stationed in Mauritius. Soviet crews of several hundred men are present during port calls, but they are allowed only limited shore leave. Consequently, Mauritian contact with Soviet naval personnel is slight.

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The Soviet Navy missed an opportunity to have an impact in Mauritius when the island was hit by Cyclone Gervaise in February 1975. The Soviet task force arrived at Mauritius eight days later than US and French ships, whose crews had already completed most of the necessary repairs by the time the Soviets appeared. Soviet sailors did manage to repair some

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electrical and communications lines, roads, and water pipes, and they contributed 32 liters of blood. The Soviet ships had apparently been dispatched to Mauritius to counterbalance Western relief efforts, but the tardiness and niggardliness of Soviet aid was resented by Mauritian officials and criticized even by the Mauritian leftist paper *Le Populaire*.

When Soviet naval ships arrive at Port Louis, the commanding officers fulfill routine protocol duties, such as visiting leading members of the Mauritian Government, laying wreaths at national monuments, and hosting receptions aboard ship for leading officials and the Mauritian-USSR Friendship Society. Press conferences have been given, and ship musicians have performed on Mauritian television. Soviet sailors on shore leave are usually kept in small groups accompanied by a petty officer and must return to the ship before nightfall. Their supply of local currency is limited; consequently, according to US Embassy personnel, the arrival of a Soviet ship arouses less interest among the local population than that of a Western one because the sailors spend less money than their Western counterparts.

Soviet warships are occasionally opened for tours, and a few Mauritian officials and businessmen sometimes go aboard. typically, however, security is tight and the ships are off limits to the Mauritian public.

Influencing Domestic Politics. Visiting Soviet ships typically take $5,000 to $10,000 in Mauritian currency for provisions and somewhat less for crews to spend ashore. Mauritian officials have expressed doubts at times about how much of the money actually is spent by the Soviet crews—especially when the Soviets draw much larger amounts of currency—and according to a US Embassy report, there have been several reports of Soviet naval involvement in the covert disbursement of funds to the MMM before the party came to power. In 1976 Prime Minister Ramgoolam told US officials that the Soviet naval ships had drawn much more in local currency than they had spent for provisions and crew disbursements.

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Cooperative Policies on Regional Issues: Indian Ocean Zone of Peace and Diego Garcia. A primary Soviet objective in the Indian Ocean is to limit or deny Western naval access. To this end, the Soviets

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have enthusiastically endorsed the concept of an Indian Ocean zone of peace (IOZP)—possibly because they recognize that it is unlikely to be established. They have consistently supported the efforts of Indian Ocean states to discuss the issue in international forums. As a corollary of this support, the Soviets constantly raise the issue of the US presence on Diego Garcia.

Ramgoolam's policy with regard to the IOZP was complicated. He endorsed the concept in principle but, according to a State Department cable, he indicated to former Secretary of State Muskie that he remained uneasy about the military consequences of limiting Western naval forces in the region. His government did not play a leading role on the issue, but the MMM was very active in its support of the IOZP and has strong ties to the leaders of the Seychelles and Madagascar, both of which are committed to the IOZP.

Diego Garcia remains a potent issue in Mauritian politics. The island was administered by the British during the colonial period. In 1965 the then self-governing colony of Mauritius (led by Ramgoolam) ceded the island to the British for $7.2 million in development aid. The United Kingdom subsequently created the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) from a number of Indian Ocean islands to provide sites for joint UK-US military facilities—chief among them, Diego Garcia.

The terms under which the island was transferred are controversial. Ramgoolam claims that he ceded Diego Garcia in exchange for a promise of quicker independence for Mauritius and that London misled him concerning its plans for the island. The British deny this and maintain that their subsequent payment of some $1.6 million to the government of Mauritius to resettle about 1,200 indigenous residents of Diego Garcia and $3 million to the residents themselves fully discharges British responsibility in the transfer. Nevertheless, in a later agreement, the British agreed to provide almost $8 million to the residents.

The Ramgoolam government privately expressed satisfaction to the US Secretary of State with the US military presence on Diego Garcia and with the presence of US naval forces in the region, but it felt compelled by the MMM to raise the issue energetically in public. Although Ramgoolam also called for the return of Diego Garcia, he mainly focused on ways in which Britain and the United States might defuse the issue—by hiring Mauritians for construction projects on the island or by paying rent to Mauritius. 25X1

Opposition to US use of Diego Garcia and the return of the island to Mauritian sovereignty are crucial planks in the MMM's foreign policy. The new government may have to moderate its stand, however, to incorporate efforts to obtain employment for Mauritians on Diego Garcia. MMM rhetoric may remain hostile, but a compromise similar to that practiced by Ramgoolam may be adopted now that the MMM is in power. 25X1 25X1

Naval Prospects

The MMM probably will join the Seychelles and Madagascar in even more strident criticism of the US naval base. An MMM government, however, may not lead to the expansion of Moscow's naval presence in Mauritius. Even under the MMM, Mauritius is unlikely to exclude only Western ships from its ports. The government will probably adopt a formula that restricts visits by all non–Indian Ocean ships similar to that used by Rene in the Seychelles. Under such a policy, French ships might still be able to call because France's ownership of the island of Reunion gives it the status of an Indian Ocean nation. Western navies may be affected by the ban more noticeably than the USSR. The Soviet Navy will suffer too, but the new government may incorporate loopholes advantageous to the USSR. Even without such concessions, Moscow is unlikely to oppose the new government's policy. Elimination or restriction of Western naval access and the overall tenor of relations with Mauritius are probably more important to Moscow than the right to call at Port Louis. 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

Seychelles

Summary 25X1

Soviet efforts in Seychelles reflect a sophisticated, long-term approach, and the Soviets have been flexible in using their Navy to pursue influence with the

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Socialist government of President Albert Rene. Soviet ships have been sent to Victoria on several occasions—reportedly at the President's request—when Rene believed his government was endangered.[11] At the end of 1981, Soviet ships responded to a mercenary coup attempt and remained in Victoria harbor until a measure of domestic order had been restored. Moscow also dispatched two warships to Victoria in May 1982—one month prior to independence celebrations that (according to an American Embassy cable) Rene feared might become violent—and kept the ships in the area of Seychelles for several weeks. The pattern of Soviet port calls and rumored Soviet requests for access to naval and air facilities have led Western nations to fear that Rene would permit an increased Soviet naval presence in return for continued support of his regime.

In late 1979 the government of Seychelles instituted a new policy limiting visits by ships from countries outside the Indian Ocean, As a result, there was a sharp drop in Soviet calls during 1980. It is possible that the Soviets played a role in the development of the new policy on naval visits, which seems to some observers to affect Western naval operations more seriously than it does those of the Soviet Navy. Unlike the USSR, the United States refuses to declare whether its ships are carrying nuclear weapons and therefore cannot schedule port calls to Victoria. Even if the Soviets did not help to shape the new regulations, however, their willingness to quietly forgo most naval access probably has done more for their long-term prospects for influence in Seychelles than would frequent naval visits. Moreover, they have positioned themselves on the side of President Rene's key foreign policy goal—the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace—thereby demonstrating sympathy with Rene's nonaligned approach and solidifying a working relationship with his government.

Thus far, it can be argued that President Rene has used the Soviet Navy to his own advantage without giving much in return. On several occasions, Soviet ship visits have lent his regime the appearance of support against domestic enemies. He also has used the Soviet naval presence as leverage in bargaining for Western economic assistance. Moreover, although the Soviets may have limited their naval visits willingly, the fact is that they currently lack any significant access to Victoria's convenient facilities. In contrast, Seychelles has extended the lease of the US Air Force space tracking station.

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Soviet patience concerning access in the Seychelles is not immutable. Despite their forbearance, the Soviets remain interested in access and are building ties with official and nonofficial Seychellois that could provide the basis for future initiatives. Eventually, Rene's paranoia may bring success to such initiatives. In that event, Rene probably will insist that any concessions to the Soviets meet at least the letter of the Seychelles's policy—that port calls be limited to ships declared to be nonnuclear or to emergencies. Rene may opt to permit some form of Soviet naval presence comparable to that of the US tracking station on the grounds of maintaining a balance but probably will stop short of any basing agreement. The importance of Western tourism to the economy of Seychelles will continue to weigh heavily against an extensive Soviet presence.

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Background: Relations Between Seychelles and the USSR

Seychelles, which comprises over 90 small islands in the west-central Indian Ocean, received independence from the United Kingdom in 1976 (see figure 8). Since 1977, when Socialist President Albert Rene seized power from a more Western-oriented leader, the Soviets have shown considerable interest in Seychelles. Seychelles response to Soviet overtures has been ambivalent: on the one hand, many Seychelles leaders feel an affinity with the USSR—a socialist, revolutionary government that shares with them a common approach to many international problems and a general antipathy toward Western countries. For example, the Minister of Education and Information has publicly extolled the inspiration provided by Lenin, and Foreign Minister Hodoul has defended the

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[11] We are not certain Rene actually requested Soviet ship visits on these occasions, but circumstantial evidence suggests he did (see discussions on pp 41-42).

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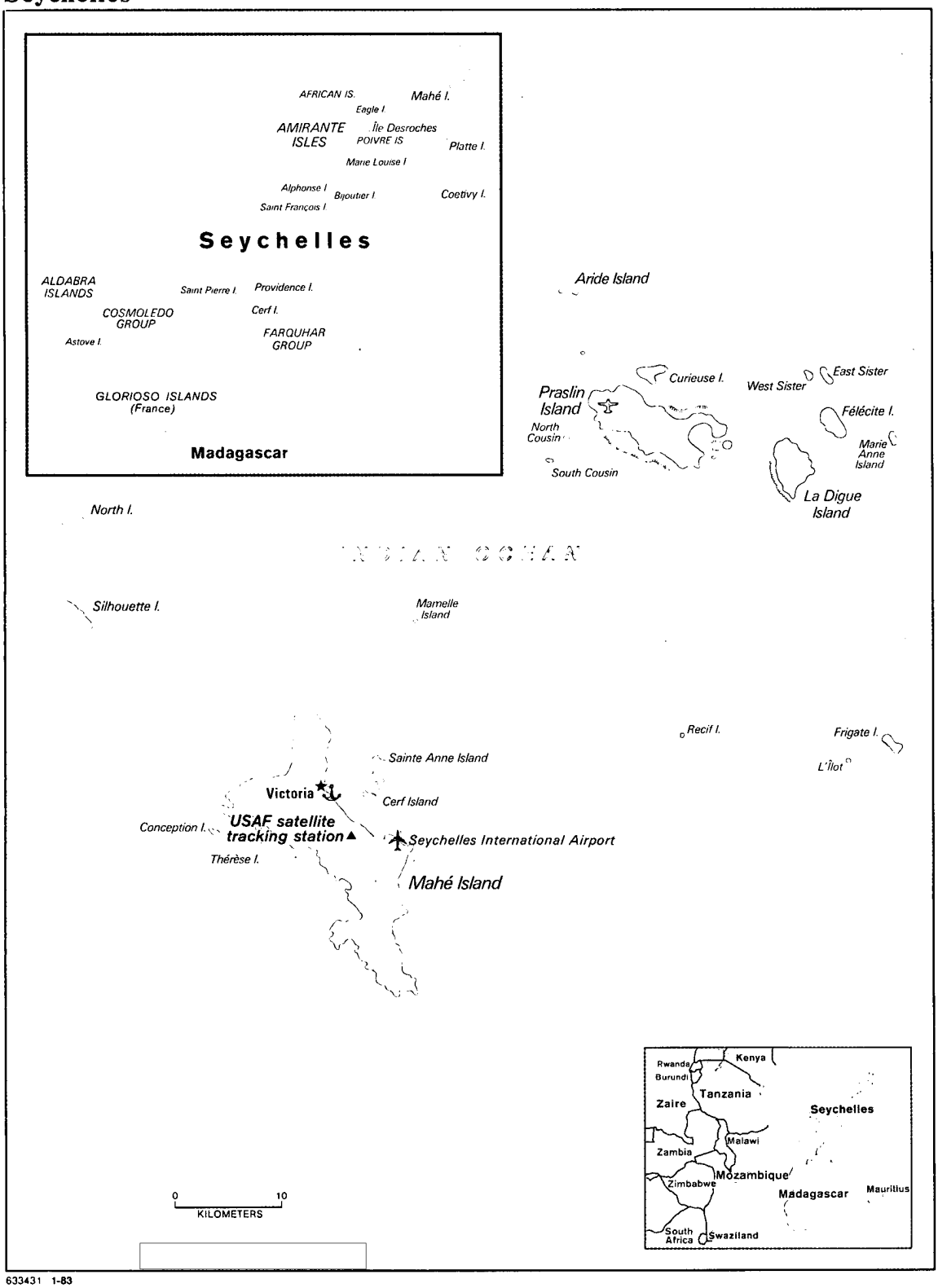
Figure 8
Seychelles



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Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to US Embassy officials. On the other hand, both the public and private statements of many officials indicate that they believe strongly in their nonaligned posture, and Seychelles retains important ties with the West. France, especially, remains an important source of economic assistance and has a degree of influence that counters that of the USSR.

Visits by the Soviet ships operating in the Indian Ocean have provided an important point of contact between Rene and the USSR, but a number of other tools also have been employed. The Soviets have actively promoted a program of military assistance to Seychelles. Equipment delivered to Rene's modest People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has included military trucks, armored personnel carriers, artillery pieces, machineguns, and small arms and ammunition.[12] In 1979, Rene refused a Soviet offer to provide equipment—a maritime surveillance aircraft, patrol boats, and a mobile radar unit—because of Soviet insistence that SPLA operators be trained in the USSR. Nevertheless, according to a US Embassy cable, early in 1980 the radar was accepted along with a six-month training course in the Soviet Union for eight SPLA soldiers. There also are Soviet instructors in Seychelles working on radars to be installed on Soviet-built naval patrol boats, the first of which arrived in October 1981. The Soviets also have provided coastal surveillance radar to Seychelles.

US Embassy evaluations note that the Soviets have assiduously cultivated left-leaning cabinet members—many of whom have considerable influence on domestic and foreign policies. Moscow also has energetically pursued exchanges with Seychelles in the cultural, educational, labor, and scientific areas, Educational exchange programs have, however, been hampered by the general reluctance of Seychelles university students to study in the USSR.

As in many Third World countries, the Soviets have worked hard to promote a fisheries agreement that would assure them privileged access to Seychelles's waters and facilities for Soviet trawlers. 25X1 Soviet fishermen have irritated the Seychellois by repeated violations of the regulations, and local officials have evidenced concern to the US Charge over the scope of Soviet fishing operations and intentions. 25X1 Although Seychelles has signed fisheries research, merchant shipping, and civil aviation agreements, it refused in early 1980 to allow special access for the Soviet fishing fleet, ending two years of negotiations. 25X1

According to the US Charge, although some of Rene's key ministers favor increased ties with the Soviets—especially in the military field—Rene prefers, to the extent possible, to rely for military assistance on Third World countries. Tanzanian and Malagasy troops have been deployed to Seychelles during periods of tension, and some 200 Tanzanians have remained there to assist the small Seychelles defense force. Libya has supplied two light aircraft for maritime reconnaissance and has funded an upgrading of the Army's communications capability. The Seychelles also has pursued close relations with and obtained assistance from Cuba and North Korea, both of which are associated with Rene through the nonaligned movement.

Naval Facilities

Port and air facilities currently available in Seychelles are of only limited value for military use. The island's principal harbor and only developed port is at Victoria, the capital city. Two piers can accommodate a total of three ships, one of which could be of cruiser size. There is a good anchorage, with a depth of 20 meters, outside the harbor. Pier space, however, is at a premium; commercial traffic is heavy enough that pierside berths are normally reserved for refueling. Fuel storage capacity is limited, and repair facilities

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and equipment can handle only vessels of small craft size. Seychelles International Airfield, which is used by major international airlines, has the runway length and aviation fuel storage area to accommodate Boeing 747s. US maritime patrol aircraft landed there about once every three months until 1979, and French maritime aircraft have used the field on several occasions since the coup.

The potential exists, of course, for development of facilities on some of the outlying islands. A small airfield with a gravel-surfaced, 825-meter airstrip is on Praslin Island, the second largest of Seychelles. The Soviet Navy occasionally uses two anchorages near Coetivy Island, some 160 nm to the southeast of Mahe. From time to time there are reports of Soviet or Cuban "activities" on Coetivy Island, but we have never been able to confirm any of these reports. In June 1980, US and British diplomats toured the island at the government's invitation, to satisfy themselves that there was no Soviet presence. The British planned during the mid-1960s to develop a major air staging complex with a 3,600-meter runway at Aldabra Islands, about 600 nm southwest of Mahe. The plan fell victim to British defense budget cuts and protests by environmentalist groups concerned with damage to Aldabra's ecosystem, but a similar project on another unpopulated atoll could not be ruled out.

For the Soviet Navy, the importance of facilities in Seychelles—either existing or potential ones—is limited. Access to any friendly port for replenishment, crew rest, and minor ship repair is welcome to a Navy operating far from its home base. Apart from other considerations, Seychelles's inviting climate, with temperatures far cooler than those in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, and its position outside the Indian Ocean's cyclone belt make it an attractive destination for ships of all the major nations operating there. However, the islands are at least three to four days' steaming time from the northwest Indian Ocean, where the Soviet Union's chief interests lie and where most of the potential naval action would take place. As a result, it is doubtful that the Soviets would use Seychelles for more than a modest number of ship visits each year.

Access to an airfield in the Southwest Indian Ocean for naval reconnaissance aircraft, however, would add significantly to Soviet naval capabilities. If IL-38 antisubmarine warfare aircraft operating out of Aden could land in Seychelles, they could cover wider operating areas or extend their on-station time in the central Indian Ocean. If they could stage out of Seychelles and return there, they could cover some areas not currently open to Soviet aerial reconnaissance—most importantly, the US naval base at Diego Garcia and the transit lanes to and from it.

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Soviet Use of Seychelles Facilities

Soviet ships have made only a few visits each year to Seychelles since the country became independent in 1976. Until 1979, ships from the United States, France, and the United Kingdom called regularly, with French ships the most frequent visitors (see table 3). Soviet ships typically take on fresh food and water in Victoria, but they do not refuel there.

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Initial Port Calls To Build Domestic Influence. The first Soviet naval port call to Seychelles after independence was made in November 1977 (following by several months the coup that brought Rene to power), when an Alligator-class landing ship visited Port Victoria for seven days. Vice Admiral Nikolay Yasakov, then Commander of the Indian Ocean Squadron, was aboard for the visit, which was part of a weeklong celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.

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The "official, friendly" visit was the first of several

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Table 3
Naval Ship Visits to the Seychelles

	USSR	United States	France	United Kingdom
1977	1	7	20	0
1978	3	5	21	3
1979	9	12	14	6
1980	4	0	1	0
1981	10	0	4	0

commemorating Soviet or Seychelles holidays, a program that appeared to represent a concerted Soviet effort to woo the young country.

During 1978 three naval ships called at Victoria. In January a Ropucha-class landing ship conducted a low-key 10-day port visit. A Don-class submarine tender called for five days in connection with May Day celebrations. In June a Kashin-class guided-missile destroyer with Vice Admiral Yasakov aboard was sent in honor of the first anniversary of Rene's accession to power.

Influencing Domestic Politics. The pattern and the apparent purpose for Soviet calls to Victoria changed in 1979. On 10 April the Kresta-I cruiser Vladivostok arrived for an 11-day stay. The visit differed from previous ones; no advance notice was given to port authorities, nor was the British Government informed as required by the independence agreement. Only one small official function was held in connection with this port call, and the ship remained outside the harbor at a buoy. According to a US Embassy report, the visit may have been requested by President Rene to provide support at a time when he believed his government was threatened by a coup. (French warships had played a similar role in the past.) The Soviet visit may have been arranged in Madagascar by the Seychelles Foreign Minister when he was there to request Malagasy assistance.[13] (By coincidence the Soviet Ambassador to the Seychelles was there at the same time.) Seychelles officials, when queried by Western diplomats, vigorously denied reports that Rene had requested the visit, but the US Charge observed that they were embarrassed by the reports and, in any case, probably did not know the true story. An additional Soviet combatant—a Kotlin-class destroyer—lingered in the waters nearby throughout the Kresta visit.

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Several other ships, including a Kara cruiser from the Minsk task force, called at Victoria from May to September 1979. The tone of these visits was anything but festive—for example, on one occasion word spread quickly in Victoria of the guards aboard the Kara who met nonofficial visitors, such as ship chandlers, holding automatic weapons. In November 1979, again fearing a mercenary invasion,[14] Rene called in 400 Tanzanian troops and arrested some 120 Seychellois, imposed a curfew, and nearly broke relations with France (which he suspected of covertly supporting a coup against him). At this point, another Soviet cruiser, the Marshal Voroshilov, arrived suddenly on 24 November for a 17-day visit—a stay of unusual length and one that appeared at times to be openended.

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[13] At about the same time, over 200 Malagasy troops were sent to Seychelles at Rene's request. On 16 April, two Malagasy warships also arrived for combined air and sea maneuvers with the Seychelles People's Army

[14] Rene—like other Indian Ocean leaders—was greatly alarmed by the mercenary-led coup of May 1978 that toppled the left-leaning government of the neighboring Comoros and replaced it with a Western-oriented government. Rene, who came to power via a coup, is acutely aware of how effective a small force can be in countries like his own.

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Once again, the US Charge was informed by the Seychelles Defense Minister that rumors to the effect that the cruiser visit had been requested by the government were unfounded; the Minister maintained that the visit was a routine port call for "crew rest and ship repair." Nevertheless, the circumstances of the visit and its length argued against such an interpretation. The ship was tied up to a buoy in the middle of the harbor throughout its stay; there were no signs of repair under way, and liberty parties were fewer than normal. The US Charge was told by Defense Minister Berlouis that the Kresta was ready to depart Victoria before it actually did so, and on one occasion, it raised anchor, circled the island, and returned to the buoy. It is possible that a ship malfunction explains the sudden, extended visit and the aborted departure, but Western observers in Seychelles tended to discount this explanation. (

During this period, there was a great deal of concern among Western countries that the USSR was making serious inroads with Seychelles—both in gaining access to naval facilities and in the broader sense of influence with a left-leaning local government. The increasing (albeit low) level of Soviet ship visits to Victoria, and especially the two cruiser visits, were seen as a clear sign of such a trend. Rene's public and private remarks suggest that Western expressions of concern and adverse publicity about the Soviet involvement in Seychelles contributed to his decision in late 1979 to change its policy—as discussed earlier—on port calls at Victoria. Prior to the coup attempt last November, there were reports that Rene was willing to make exceptions for Soviet ships—that is, consider some Soviet calls "emergencies" and try to limit publicity concerning such visits—whenever he felt his regime was threatened. Rene also has called on French warships for assistance since the coup attempt, but formally the limitation of port calls remains in effect.

Formal Naval Access

Revision of Seychelles Policy on Naval Visits (1979). Opposition to foreign basing in the Indian Ocean has been a keystone of Rene's foreign policy. His government has ardently supported the establishment of an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (preferring a multilateral effort to a bilateral agreement between the two great powers). It is among the leaders of regional opposition to the United States' use of Diego Garcia as a military support facility.

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Rene does permit the US Air Force to operate a satellite tracking station in the mountains of Mahe Island, and in 1981 he agreed to extend the lease until 1990. Rene's comments to the US Ambassador indicate that he regards the station as an embarrassment, and he insisted on a substantial increase in the annual rent (from about $600,000 to $2.5 million) before he would renew the lease. The government has contended that the station has no military role and would be loath to lose the substantial revenue that the station provides. Nonetheless, Rene has said that he would close the station if he found that it was being used for military purposes.

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Seychelles officials, including Rene, have repeatedly denied any intention of allowing the Soviets to establish "bases" in Seychelles. Rene has stated publicly that the Soviets have never requested such bases, although according to the US Charge some of Rene's subordinates have privately recounted several instances of pressure for "basing" rights. Rene and others among his top leadership seem to be genuinely disturbed by the notion that allowing port visits and providing even minimal ship support encourages the great powers by making their deployment of naval forces to the area easier.

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Although some attempt is made at evenhandedness, the public statements of Seychelles officials and government-controlled media imply that the United States, because of its presence on Diego Garcia, is the chief culprit in the buildup of foreign naval forces in the Indian Ocean. Seychelles policies on foreign use of its facilities, moreover, changed in 1979 in ways that have affected the US Navy more than the Soviet Navy.

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As early as 1978 Rene indicated that he was considering "banning" the use of Seychelles facilities by countries that "substantially" increased their forces in the Indian Ocean. Standing permission for quarterly

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US maritime reconnaissance flights to land in the Seychelles was quietly withdrawn in November 1979, and soon after, the government promulgated a new set of restrictions on visits, some of which appeared to be directed particularly at the United States. These included:

- A limit on visits by ships and aircraft of non–Indian Ocean states (six a year for ships and eight a year for aircraft).
- A ban on landing privileges for planes coming from or going to Diego Garcia.
- A ban on all vessels that are nuclear powered or that carry nuclear weapons.

The new regulations do not apply to research ships. Countries seeking permission for ship visits are required to state whether a ship is nuclear powered and if it carries nuclear arms. The first question poses no problem for the United States, but the United States refuses as a matter of policy to confirm or deny the presence of nuclear arms on its ships. Seychelles officials, including Rene, have suggested some face-saving formulations that might allow US port calls, but the United States has not been willing to accept such measures. As a result, no US vessels called in Victoria during 1980 or 1981.

According to the US Charge and other Western observers, the policy appears to have been initiated by Foreign Minister Jacques Hodoul, who is intensely anti–United States and anti-West. Most other Seychelles officials seem not to have been aware of the impact the new policy would have. Many Western diplomats believe that the policy was intended to end US ship visits while allowing visits by the Soviets, who seem to be willing to file the required declarations.[15] These observers suspect that Hodoul was coached by the Soviets in formulating new regulations for ship visits. It may also be, however, that Hodoul turned for advice to India, which has a similar policy against visits by nuclear-powered or nuclear-armed warships and which exerts considerable influence on some Seychelles officials.

[15] Soviet ships have called in other states requiring such declarations; we do not know whether they have ever lied concerning the absence of nuclear weapons during such visits.

The new policy has caused internal dissatisfaction, as well as charges in the Western press that Seychelles is sliding into the Soviet camp. The Hotel Owners Association petitioned Rene in August 1980 for a resumption of US naval visits, but the government has thus far reiterated its willingness to live with the loss of revenues (as much as $150,000 per visit for Western ships). The tourist industry is the Seychelles's most important source of hard currency and foreign exchange, however, and the country's appeal to West Europeans must remain an important factor in the government's calculations.[16]

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All of the external powers operating in the Indian Ocean, including the USSR, have been affected by the new policy. Like the United States, Britain has refused to submit the required declarations and has forcefully protested the new policy to the Seychelles Government. The French apparently requested, and were granted, a visit for an oiler in August without filing a declaration. Nevertheless, French ship visits for 1980 were far below those for previous years.

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Soviet Access Under the New Policy. Fewer Soviet ships visited Seychelles after the introduction of the new regulations. Late in 1981, however, the Soviet Navy probably was called on to again perform the role of regime support. At the end of September 1981, a Soviet warship and an oiler called at Victoria for four days. It was the first visit by a Soviet warship since April 1980.

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A month later, a group of South African mercenaries attempted to overthrow Rene. A French ship arrived in Victoria on 27 November, possibly to support Rene, but apparently Rene felt that the presence of Soviet ships would

[16] In 1980 Seychelles imported goods worth $79 million and exported only about $5 million worth of goods. If it were not for some $45 million in earnings from tourism and $3 million in funds transferred from abroad, the country's current account deficit would have been $74 million, rather than $27 million. In addition, Western economic aid during 1980—the most recent year for which data are available—totaled about $18 million, while economic assistance from Communist countries was negligible.

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have a greater impact than the single French frigate. Two Soviet warships left their operating area in the northwest Indian Ocean and made a rapid transit to Victoria, arriving on 29 November. After their stay in Victoria, the ships made several calls at other ports in the region and returned to Seychelles at the end of December. In addition, the Soviets sent an Alligator landing ship to Victoria for the first two weeks of December.

It is unclear whether this effort in late 1981 by the Soviets to use their Navy to gain influence by supporting Rene's regime has altered the relationship between the two states. Even prior to the coup attempt, there were rumors that Rene was moving away from his stand on nonalignment. Such rumors were based on the delivery of Seychelles's first Soviet naval craft in October and on reports that Rene had permitted Soviet experts to survey for a communications site on Mahe. In the wake of the the South African coup attempt in 1981, such speculation has continued.

Rene visited Paris in early 1982, and military aid talks may eventually result in formalizing the French patrols of Seychelles' coastal waters that have been carried out since November 1981, more French port calls, and improved logistic support for French ships at Victoria. The French may also get involved in other aspects of upgrading coastal defenses and plan to send a small team of experts to Seychelles. It seems that Rene, despite his strong fears, would prefer to avoid sole dependence on the USSR.

Naval Prospects. The Soviets remain interested in naval access in the southwestern Indian Ocean despite their statements to the contrary. Soviet naval ships continue to call sporadically in Mauritius and Mozambique, and the Soviets continue to press Madagascar for some form of naval access. Nonetheless, the primary Soviet goals seem to be to limit or deny naval access to Western navies and to build long-term relationships with current or future governments in the region. To secure these ends, Moscow appears willing to forgo access for its own Navy and to cooperate with Rene's restriction of ship visits. It seems likely that Rene will continue to provide a means to circumvent the restriction when he feels sufficiently threatened but will do so without granting major naval concessions to the USSR.

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Singapore

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Summary

From the late 1960s until 1980, Soviet naval ships called regularly at Singapore en route to and from the Indian Ocean. From 1972 to 1980, Soviet auxiliaries were repaired in Singapore's dockyards. Although not critical to Soviet Pacific Fleet operations, this access represented a significant improvement to its logistic support. The government of Singapore has seen these services as a strictly commercial arrangement, with both economic and political benefits that did not compromise its basically pro-Western orientation. However, following the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea with Soviet support and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, we believe that Singapore's leaders reached the conclusion that repairing Soviet naval ships sent an inaccurate message to the Soviets and the world. In early 1980 Singapore refused further access for repair of Soviet naval ships and denied landing rights to aircraft other than scheduled Aeroflot operations.

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Background: The Relationship Between Singapore and the USSR

The government of Singapore has been wary of the Soviets since the island became independent in 1965. The relationship between the two countries has worsened since early 1979, when Vietnam invaded Kampuchea with the USSR's support. Singapore repeatedly has expressed its opposition to Soviet policy in Southeast Asia and in Afghanistan. The pro-Western

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and anti-Communist orientation of the government is reflected in its continued membership in the British Commonwealth and in ASEAN, an association of non-Communist Southeast Asian states.[17] Its defense forces exercise regularly with those of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, and the United States.

Although Singapore regards itself primarily as a Southeast Asian, rather than an Indian Ocean, country, it has an interest in the overall balance of power in the Indian Ocean and clearly favors a Western presence there. Singapore's maritime security forces carefully monitor Soviet naval traffic to and from the Indian Ocean and regularly exchange information on this traffic with Western attaches. It does not appear to be overly concerned, however, with the fluctuations of Soviet naval force levels in the Indian Ocean. Singapore has kept its distance from regional proposals for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace, and a report by the Quadrinational Intelligence Group noted that the government has rejected Soviet efforts to link the zone of peace concept with Asian collective security proposals.

Despite Singapore's pro-West orientation, it has established a businesslike trade relationship with the USSR, an important element of which has been the servicing and repair of Soviet ships. More than 1,000 Soviet ships—most of them merchant vessels—called there in 1979, the peak year to date (see table 4). The USSR has been the largest customer at Keppel shipyard, accounting for about 10 percent of the ships repaired there. The value of overhauls to Soviet ships probably exceeded $20 million during 1980, accounting for about 10 percent of the total earnings of Singapore's shipyards. A joint-venture company, SINSOV, oversees the services to Soviet ships calling at Singapore and acts as agent for all Soviet shipping companies, and SUDOIMPORT, the Soviet ship-repair agent in Singapore, arranges for repairs to both merchant and naval ships.

The two countries also have a fishing agreement that permits bunkering by and repair of Soviet fishing boats in Singapore yards and the processing of the regional Soviet fish catch in Singapore. A joint-venture company, MARISSCO, was established in 1975 to oversee these activities.

[17] The other members of ASEAN are Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Table 4
Soviet Ship Visits to Singapore

Year of Entry [a]	Naval and Naval-Associated Merchant Ships			Total Soviet Visits, Including Merchant Ships [b]
	Replenishment	Repair/ Overhaul	Total	
Total (1969-81)	**184**	**76**	**260**	**8,000+**
1969	10		10	480
1970	16		16	500
1971	16		16	Unknown
1972	16	3	19	Unknown
1973	23	10	33	510
1974	17	14	31	600
1975	10	14	24	680
1976	11	6	17	800
1977	21	12	33	770
1978	16	9	25	840
1979	17	6	23	1,010
1980	6	2	8	980
1981	5		5	890

[a] Data for 1967 and 1968 are not available.
[b] Overall figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. Figures for merchant ships vary and are not available for some years. Those for 1974-76 have been estimated, based on monthly averages. Those for 1981 are estimated for the last half year.

Naval Facilities

Singapore, located at the eastern entry to the Strait of Malacca, is the second-busiest port in the world and the most important stop on the shipping lanes between Europe and East Asia. It has an excellent harbor, one of the world's largest oil refinery complexes, and extensive shipyard facilities. Fresh water and produce are abundant.

The two primary shipyards are the Keppel Shipyard, located on the south side of the island adjacent to the Strait of Malacca, and the Sembawang Shipyard complex, on the isolated north side of Singapore

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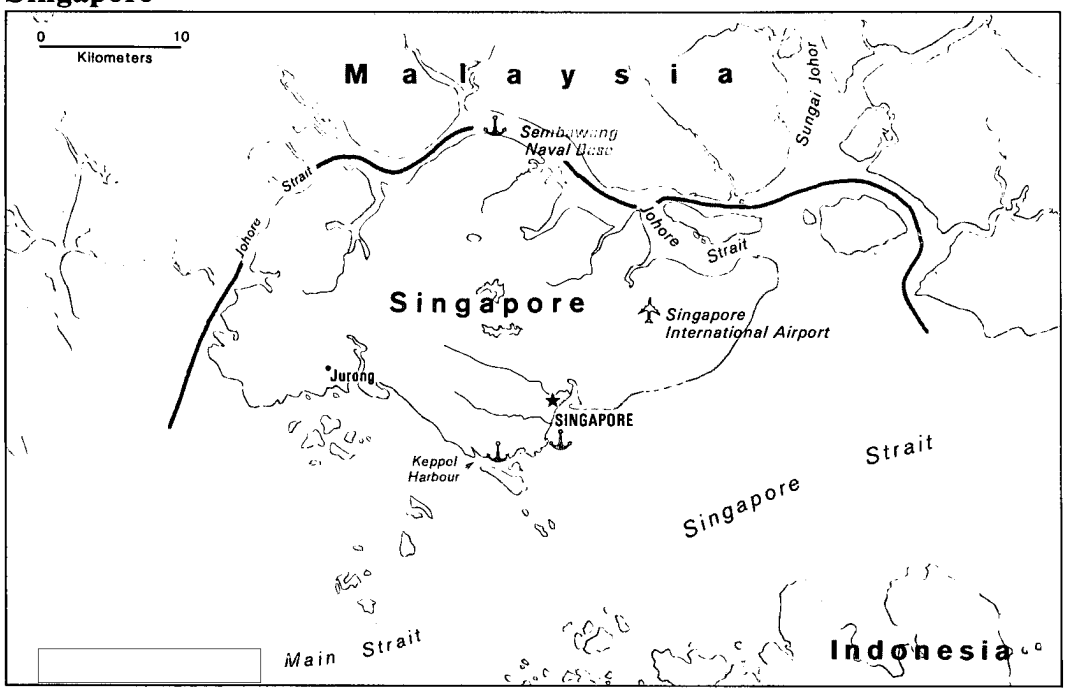
Figure 9
Singapore



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Island (see figure 9). Each year some 3,800 merchant ships use the commercial facilities at Keppel, which are controlled by the Singapore Port Authority. Most of the Soviet ships repaired in Singapore are handled in Keppel's six large graving docks.

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The Sembawang complex was a major UK naval base until 1971. Sembawang has berths for seven visiting ships, two graving docks, four floating docks, and eight repair berths. Most of the port—including the shipyard—is now controlled by the Singapore Port Authority, but the UK Ministry of Defense continues to control access to two berths used by Western navies. The Singapore Government has been conscious of Western sensitivity about this area, and for the most part, has attempted to keep Soviet ships away.

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There also are three large graving docks and a floating drydock at Jurong, on the southwestern side of the island. Two of Singapore's drydocks have a capacity of 400,000 deadweight tons (dwt), and two others can handle 300,000 dwt.

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The excellence of the facilities is complemented by a good supply of highly skilled workmen. Singapore's shipyards export a variety of small but high-quality naval vessels. Major ship overhauls and conversions, rebuilding of engines, and installation and repair of sophisticated equipment have been performed on Soviet merchant, fishing, and civilian research ships. Singapore shipyard labor costs undercut those in other technologically capable countries by as much as 50 percent.

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Singapore has four major airfields. Singapore International Airport is a first-class facility served by a number of international airlines. This airport and Tengah Airbase—a former RAF facility—have 2,740-meter runways, but Tengah is the only airfield on the island with a reinforced runway capable of accommodating heavy jet aircraft. Two other airfields—Seletar and Changi—are used by the Singapore forces but have asphalt runways of less than 2,000 meters.

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Soviet Use of Singapore's Facilities

Initial Port Calls and Repair Agreements. Soviet merchant ships have called at Singapore for decades, but the US Embassy in Singapore notes that Soviet naval research ships apparently began visiting there in about 1967. Visits by naval auxiliaries and naval-associated merchant ships followed as an increasing number of Soviet ships transited the Malacca Straits to and from the Indian Ocean.

During 1969 the Soviets initiated requests to the government of Singapore for permission to increase the number of naval ships visiting Singapore, to have their ships repaired in local dockyards, and to create a new entity to oversee bunkering for Soviet ships. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew aroused considerable concern among Western governments when he indicated confidentially to his Anglo Saxon allies that he was considering favorably the Soviet proposal, although he promised to restrict Soviet ships from the UK naval base at Sembawang. He evidently feared that some of Singapore's extensive shipyard facilities would lie unused after the British departure. Moreover, Soviet visits would tend to buttress Singapore's image as a nonaligned nation.

Following the visit of a Soviet delegation to the Keppel Shipyard in April 1971, an agreement was reached that provided for Soviet port calls and repairs to Soviet merchant ships. The agreement did not authorize the creation of a separate Soviet entity for bunkering, nor did it permit access to Sembawang. Provisioning and repair were to take place in one of the facilities on the southern coast of the island, and ship visits required permission and a 10-day notice. Singapore officials assured Western representatives that they would control tightly the stay and movements of Soviet personnel ashore during port calls and overhauls. The first Soviet merchant ship was repaired in July 1971, and the overhaul of naval auxiliaries commenced in May 1972.

Although Singapore never specifically undertook to deny access to Soviet combatants, there appears to have been an unwritten agreement concerning the distinction between combatants and auxiliaries. Only one Soviet combatant—a Kotlin-class destroyer—has visited Singapore.

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It stayed only briefly before continuing on to Vladivostok after operating for six months in the Indian Ocean. A few months later, permission was requested and granted for the visit of another destroyer and a minesweeper, but the visit never took place.

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Repair of Soviet merchant ships, however, expanded throughout the 1970s. In 1974 Soviet and East European merchant ships berthed at a pier near the ANZUK-controlled portion of Sembawang for the first time. Early in 1975 Singapore rejected a Soviet request to have a naval oiler repaired at Sembawang. The managing director of Sembawang told the US Naval attache that the decision had been motivated primarily by pique at the Soviet effort to misrepresent the ship as a merchantman. The same official made it clear that the shipyard intended to solicit further Soviet ship repair business, and later that year, it became clear that Singapore was considering opening the overhaul facilities at Sembawang to Soviet merchant ships. Singapore claimed that Soviet ships probably would be given access to Malaysian facilities scheduled to open just across the Johore Strait. This would invalidate the old arguments about denying them access to Johore and, incidentally, risk the loss of ship repair business to Malaysia. Singapore assured Western officials that Soviet naval ships would continue to be denied access to Sembawang and that they would control the access of Soviet merchant ships to minimize the risk to security. In May 1976 Sembawang Shipyard authorities signed a contract with the USSR for the repair of three civilian vessels.

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During the 1970s a fairly predictable pattern for Soviet naval port calls and overhauls was established. Annual calls for replenishment ranged from 10 to 23,

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the number varying with the level of Soviet deployments to the Indian Ocean. Overhauls of naval ships varied from three to 14 with no clear pattern evident, although the high levels in 1974 and 1975 probably reflected increased needs for ship repairs stemming from the mine-clearing and salvage operations in Bangladesh during 1973 and 1974. Except for the incident involving the Soviet Kotlin-class destroyer in 1971, the Soviet-Singapore agreement worked smoothly. The Soviets consistently requested permission for visits in advance, and no naval ships were repaired at Sembawang. Interestingly, the government managed to keep the Soviet naval repair arrangements so low key that an article in Singapore's leading daily newspaper in November 1978 discussed the multimillion dollar business as though it had just begun.

Singapore apparently has had reason to be concerned with security, however. In one case the US defense attache reported that the sonar dome and external components were removed from a Western commercial survey ship anchored next to a Soviet civilian scientific research ship in Singapore. The Soviet ship departed port prior to the discovery of the theft. In early 1982 Singapore expelled a Soviet shipyard official for espionage activities. The incident coincided with similar cases in Indonesia and Malaysia and may have been prosecuted to embarrass the USSR rather than because the agent was a real security threat.

Restriction of Soviet Use of Facilities (1980). Singapore was one of a very few nations in the world to take an action specifically targeted against Soviet military capabilities as a response to Soviet actions in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia. Following the invasion of Kampuchea by Vietnam in late 1978, the government of Singapore expressed mounting alarm over the strength and aggressiveness of Vietnam and Soviet support of the invasion. Most members of ASEAN denied Soviet requests for port calls, and the organization discussed measures to respond to the situation. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 heightened their concern. In late 1979 Singapore rejected a Soviet request for landing permission for an Aeroflot aircraft carrying a change of crew for a merchant vessel, and in early 1980, for the first time in some years, permission was denied for six Soviet naval ships—an oiler and five research vessels—to call for provisions. Singapore officials appeared suspicious that the ships had missions other than for "scientific research."

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In March 1980 the government officially banned repairs to Soviet naval auxiliaries. A senior official, citing past visits by Soviet naval ships, stated that his government "certainly would not consider that form of assistance, not now." An exception was made for repairs to two naval oilers, because contracts had been concluded months earlier. The ban also extended to overflight, landing, and refueling rights for Soviet aircraft, other than regularly scheduled commercial flights. Although officially the new policy did not ban brief visits by naval auxiliaries, the Singapore Government seems to have limited sharply the number of such visits.

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Visits and repairs of nonnaval ships were not affected by the ban; thus, the economic impact on Singapore has been limited. From January to June 1981, only 20 Soviet ships were repaired in Singapore in contrast to 35 during the same period in 1980. The number of merchant ship visits was down somewhat in 1980, and declined about 6 percent between 1980 and 1981. Overall trade with the USSR has remained higher than in past years, however, thus cushioning the economy from the loss of Soviet naval repair contracts.

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Impact of Soviet Naval Presence

Singapore's Value as a Port of Call. Port calls at Singapore clearly have been attractive to the Soviet Navy. Singapore lies at about the midpoint between Vladivostok and the Gulf of Aden area, which is the focus of Soviet operations in the Indian Ocean. It is an appealing location for crew rest, provisions, and minor repairs. Nevertheless, alternatives exist. Soviet ships transiting to and from the Indian Ocean increasingly put in at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, which is about

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two days' steaming time from Singapore. A smaller number of calls is made in Sri Lanka, four or five days' transit from Singapore.

Two-thirds of the Soviet naval ships visiting Singapore stay for only a few days. They take on food and water, and some crews have had shore leave. Naval auxiliaries rarely have purchased fuel in Singapore, though Soviet merchant ships often have.

Until 1980 approximately two-thirds of the naval oilers and cargo ships—including arms carriers—operating in the Indian Ocean stopped at Singapore en route to or from station. Smaller proportions of other types of auxiliaries—such as hydrographic research ships—and naval-associated merchant ships have used Singapore in connection with deployments to the Indian Ocean.

Singapore's Value as a Repair Facility. Prior to March 1980, the Soviet Navy used Singapore's facilities for scheduled overhauls and for deployment-related repairs. Soviet naval ships overhauled in Singapore normally were scraped and painted. Engines were completely broken down, with small parts and fittings cleaned and machined or replaced; propellers, pumps, refrigeration equipment, and other major systems were cleaned, lubricated, tested, and repaired. This level of repair, which corresponds roughly to what the Soviets call "medium repair," is performed on some classes of combatants at intervals of five to six years. Some ships, possibly because of higher activity levels, require such repairs more frequently, and a number of the naval auxiliaries were repaired in Singapore two or three times at intervals of one to three years.[18]

Twenty-five ships entered Singapore for repairs in connection with an Indian Ocean deployment—19 returning from duty there, three en route, and three in the middle of a deployment. From 1972 to 1974, almost all of these deployment-related visits lasted less than three weeks, which would permit only relatively minor repairs.[19] After 1974 the pattern changed, and most of the ships in for deployment-related overhauls stayed for periods of four to 12 weeks. The change could have been indicative of improved planning, which made possible the more efficient use of Singapore facilities in connection with normal Indian Ocean deployments. This explanation, however, confronts the puzzling fact that the Soviets have on several occasions brought a ship home from an Indian Ocean deployment, sent it down to Singapore for overhaul, brought it back to Vladivostok, and then deployed it once again to the Indian Ocean. Occurrences such as this question the efficiency of the process by which the Soviet Navy plans for operations and repair cycles.

It appears that access to Singapore's shipyards represented an important asset to Soviet planners and probably alleviated some of the demands on Soviet shipyards. The seriousness of a long-term loss to the Soviet Navy of Singapore's repair facilities is difficult to estimate. Pacific Fleet naval repair facilities are extremely congested. Those yards that repair merchant ships are busy, although less congested than the naval repair yards, and some naval auxiliaries can be sent to these civilian facilities for overhaul. An average of nine naval ships were repaired each year in Singapore's docks between 1972 and 1980. These represent only a small portion of the Pacific Fleet's more than 200 auxiliaries, but if auxiliaries are overhauled at intervals of two to five years, the nine represent a large proportion of the ships needing overhaul in any one year. Moreover, the ships sent to Singapore for repair were among the most active in the Pacific Fleet—they were repeatedly selected to support distant-area deployments. Certain kinds of

[18] Twenty-four ships were repaired in Singapore more than once between 1972 and 1980—11 twice, 12 three times, and one four times.

[19] The only exceptions involved two heavy-lift buoy tenders that spent 13 to 17 weeks in Singapore dockyards following lengthy tours of duty harbor clearing in Bangladesh.

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sensitive work probably cannot be performed in Singapore's yards. On the other hand, the Singapore labor force may be more efficient in some respects than its Soviet counterpart, and the overall repair process could actually be more cost efficient than if done in Soviet yards.

Naval Prospects

The government's efforts over the past decade to circumscribe Soviet naval access probably have been dictated in part by Singapore's sensitivity to the feelings of Western governments, and so long as its chief economic, political, and military interests lie with the West, it probably will go on limiting carefully its relationship with the Soviet Union. The role of the Soviet Navy in the overall relationship between Singapore and the USSR has been small, and the effect of the Soviet naval presence has been correspondingly minimal.

Access to Singapore's shipyards has been more important to the Soviet Navy than to Singapore. Although repairs and services to Soviet naval ships represent a financial gain to Singapore, that business has never been large enough to decisively influence the country's policy. The value of all Soviet ships serviced or repaired in Singapore is, of course, much larger than that of the naval business. Loss of the merchant trade undoubtedly would be felt by the country's economy. During first-half 1982, Moscow apparently began to look to Sri Lanka as a potential site of naval repairs, but thus far Sri Lanka cannot match the convenience or proficiency of Singapore's yards. The Soviets have few realistic alternatives to Singapore. There was no evidence of concern by Singaporean officials that their decision to ban repairs to Soviet naval ships would result in the loss of Soviet merchant business or any other retaliatory measure. Singapore's Western orientation probably precludes a significant alteration in this picture for as long as the current leadership is in place.

South Yemen

Summary

The Navy has been an integral part of Soviet efforts to maintain or expand influence in South Yemen. The first Soviet port call took place in 1968—six months after South Yemen's independence from Great Britain—and Soviet ships visited Aden regularly throughout the 1970s. Following the loss of access to naval facilities in Somalia in 1977, Soviet ships made more frequent visits to Aden, where they could secure fresh water, perform minor repairs, and provide for crew rest. In addition, Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft based at Aden's International Airport monitor Western naval activity in the Indian Ocean.

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The USSR has provided the bulk of South Yemen's naval equipment, including missile patrol boats and a large modern landing ship. The transfers have created a continuing tie through the provision of spare parts and maintenance. The Soviets also train Yemeni personnel to operate and maintain the ships and have conducted at least one joint naval exercise with South Yemen. Although we cannot measure the impact of the small number of naval advisers in South Yemen—as distinct from other Soviet personnel—Moscow probably considers their presence one source of continuing leverage.

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As a Marxist-oriented state, South Yemen is ideologically and pragmatically inclined to pursue policies that serve Soviet as well as South Yemen's interests. Politically estranged from its moderate Arab neighbors, South Yemen relies on Soviet arms and advisers to defend its borders. Aden also looks to Moscow for protection against what it regards as increased US threats from Washington's expanding military relationship with several regional states.

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For Moscow, a central objective is to limit Aden's options to pursue independent regional policies, particularly with respect to issues such as improving economic relations with the West, support for regional insurgencies, and the potential rapprochement with moderate Persian Gulf states. Aside from the operational benefits accruing from access to Aden, the Soviet naval presence facilitates those policies that Moscow endorses and limits Aden's freedom of action elsewhere. The sealift to Ethiopia in 1977-78, for example, which made extensive use of South Yemen's ports, expanded on a commitment that Aden had already made to Ethiopia. At the same time, however,

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Moscow probably was not displeased that the increased cooperation between the USSR and South Yemen evident in the sealift probably disrupted Aden's improving relations with Saudi Arabia.

Naval presence has had a marginal impact on the Soviets' ability to influence South Yemen's internal policies. There have been several leadership changes in South Yemen since 1968. The Soviets have been concerned about internal stability on each occasion. In June 1978 they apparently used their naval presence to bolster the new regime, but they did not take similar action when the current leadership took control in April 1980. Soviet naval presence is neither highly visible nor formalized and therefore is not an embarrassment to the South Yemeni Government as it was in Guinea, although there is popular hostility toward the Soviets who live in Aden, including naval personnel. The current regime is unlikely to sever its ties with the USSR, but we do not believe it will expand the naval access already granted.

Although Aden is not essential to the operations of the Indian Ocean Squadron, the Soviets have sought a formal agreement on naval access since 1974. They apparently placed heavy pressure on South Yemen's leadership several times, but the Yemenis resisted on each occasion, citing the taint of neocolonialism.

Since the loss of Berbera, the Soviets seem to favor the development of a number of small logistic centers for the Indian Ocean Squadron—which is exactly what they have in Aden even without a written agreement—rather than one all-encompassing facility. As a result, interest in wider access to facilities in Aden will continue but will not be the driving force behind Soviet policy in the region. To protect their future options, the Soviets probably will continue to push for a formal access agreement but not with such determination that they endanger the broader range of ties with South Yemen.

Background: Relations Between South Yemen and the USSR

For more than a decade, the Soviet Union has maintained a commitment to the Marxist regime in South Yemen.[20] Initial ties with the Aden regime were an outgrowth of the marginal Soviet support given to leftist groups involved in South Yemen's four-year (1963-67) war of independence. Moscow promptly recognized South Yemen's independence from Great Britain, but because of a prior Soviet commitment to North Yemen and the uncertainty of a continuing power struggle in Aden, the Soviets initially limited their ties with Aden. After 1969 Soviet disenchantment with the increasingly pro-Western policies of North Yemen and the apparent internal stabilization in the South permitted the conclusion of an aid package that included military advisers and equipment, the training of South Yemeni pilots, and a fisheries agreement. In 1970 the state was reconstituted as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen under a Marxist-oriented regime. A pattern of increasingly large aid agreements testified to Moscow's desire to bind the radical republic to its policies.

The Soviet-Yemeni relationship has not been uniformly harmonious. Soviet efforts to influence Aden's foreign policy have been complicated by internal and external factors including:

- Instability resulting from political, tribal, and religious rivalries that are beyond Moscow's control.
- Competition between the USSR and China for regional influence.
- Contradictions arising from continued Soviet ties to the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR or North Yemen).
- Changes in the tenor of Soviet-Saudi relations that in turn affect the regional role that Moscow sees for Aden.
- South Yemen's search for economic assistance from moderate Persian Gulf states and the West.

In spite of the inconsistencies created by these factors, South Yemen remains militarily and symbolically valuable to the USSR. Aden has the potential to control access to both the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. With a government structure modeled on the

[20] Names in the Yemens can be confusing. North Yemen, officially called the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), also goes by the name of its capital, Sanaa. South Yemen, officially the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), is frequently called Aden, after its capital and the name it had as part of the British Empire.

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USSR, it also stands as an outpost of Soviet ideology in the region. As a result, Moscow has invested heavily in securing a naval presence in South Yemen and in efforts to use its naval presence to enhance regional political aims.

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Naval Facilities

The harbor at Aden is one of the finest in the Indian Ocean (see figure 10). It is well sheltered by mountain ranges, and navigation is not restricted by obstacles or tidal change. Although Aden has not fully recovered economically from the effects of the closure of the Suez Canal, it is an active bunkering port capable of mooring 30 ships and bunkering 13. Both cargo-handling and repair facilities have limited use, however, because they are outmoded and not maintained properly. Aden's chief advantage is that fresh water is available year round at fees lower than elsewhere in the area. In a region where temperatures range from the high 20s to mid-30s Centigrade in summer, the availability of water outweighs the scarcity of other provisions.

Two other areas of naval interest in South Yemen are Perim Island and the anchorages off Socotra Island. For many years, Perim's facilities consisted of deteriorating British-built piers and support buildings. Minor improvements were made in the early 1970s, and some new construction began by January 1980. A 40-meter floating pontoon pier of the type used by the Soviet Pacific Fleet was fitted to new earthworks. With the new pier, Perim can handle any Yemeni ships as well as Soviet ships that patrol the Bab al Mandeb Strait. At the same time, Perim's defenses were upgraded. Soviet ships occasionally call there and bring provisions to the Yemeni garrison.

Socotra is an inhospitable island with no proper port facilities. There are 10 semiprotected anchorages off the north and west coasts that are used as the monsoons permit. The Soviets do not require Aden's consent to use the Socotra anchorages, which are in international waters.

Soviet Use of South Yemen's Facilities

The Soviets have called at Aden regularly since 1968, but they make surprisingly little use of the shore facilities. Soviet ships do not use the repair facilities of the National Dockyard Company, nor did the Soviets use the drydock they towed there from Berbera in 1977.[21] Minor repairs are carried out by Soviet support ships, some specifically deployed to the Indian Ocean to operate with an individual unit. The Soviets have used Aden's bunkering facilities on rare occasions, but Soviet warships tend to be refueled by their own support ships often outside the harbor prior to entry. Currently, the USSR maintains a small yard oiler in Aden. Access to Aden enables Soviet ships to take on fresh water and provides opportunities for crew rest. It also is the port call for mail, and relief crews may be flown into Aden.

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[21] The floating drydock that was in Berbera was towed to Aden in November 1977. It remained there unused until April 1978, when it was moved to Dahlak Island in the Red Sea where it has been used for repair of Soviet and Ethiopian surface combatants and Soviet submarines.

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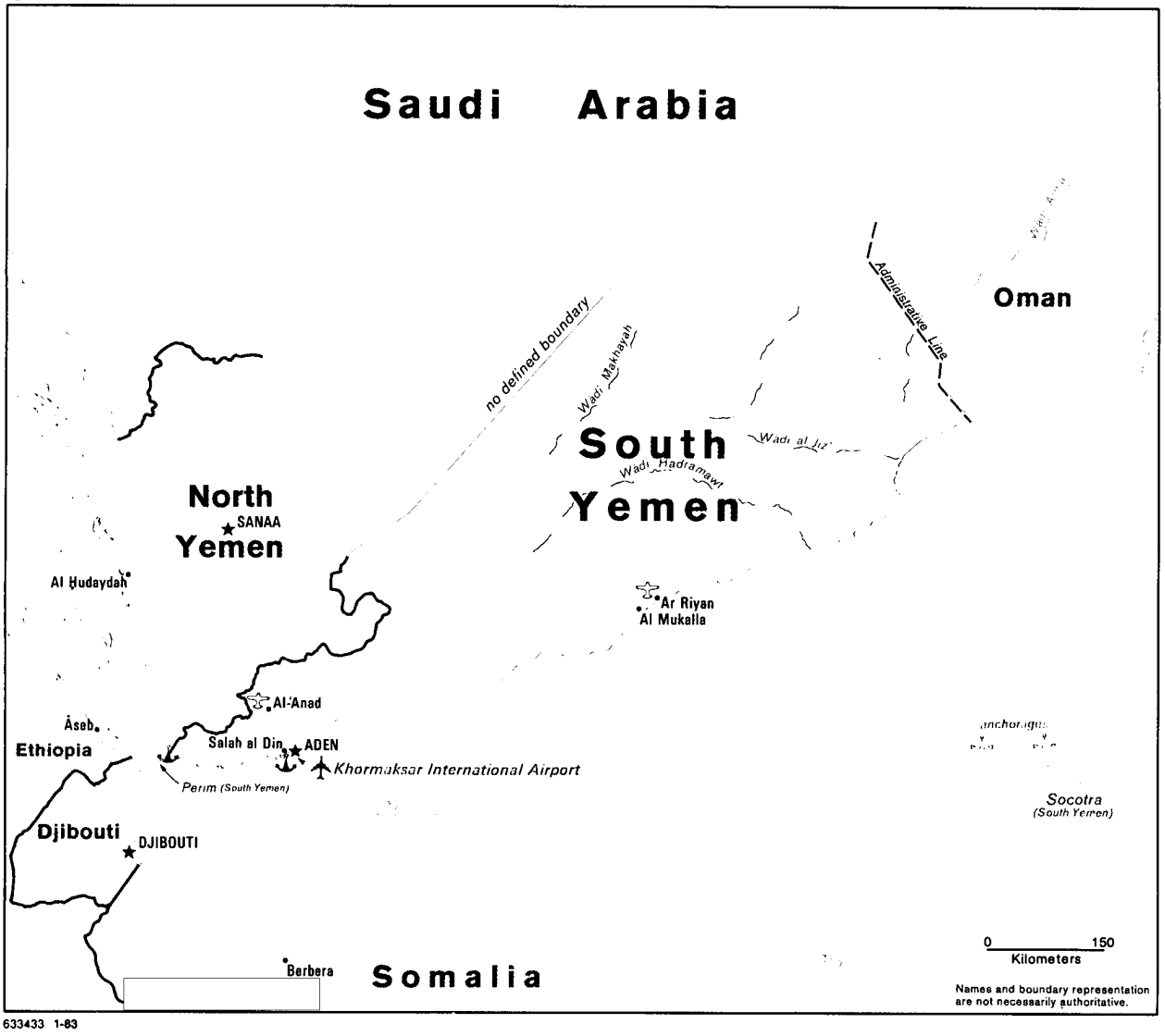
Figure 10
South Yemen



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Soviet submarines also have expanded their use of Aden. An F-class torpedo attack submarine and a J-class cruise missile submarine visited in 1978. In

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Table 5
Soviet Naval Visits to South Yemen

	Number of Visits	Average Stay (*Days*)	Combatant/ Auxiliary/ Hydro	Total days in Port Aden	Soviet Ship-Days in the Indian Ocean	Time in Port as Percent of Indian Ocean ship-days
1968	5	3.2	8/4/4	16	1,850	0.86
1969	19	5	27/47/21	95	4,152	2.29
1970	13	6.6	23/48/15	86	4,189	2.05
1971	30	5.7	67/105/	172	3,973	4.33
1972	19	4.3	22/53/6	81	8,854	0.91
1973	18	5.3	58/34/3	95	8,895	1.07
1974	45	7.7	235/83/27	345	10,501	3.29
1975	35	13.9	251/226/10	487	7,168	6.79
1976	28	7.8	108/86/24	218	7,335	2.97
1977	35	7.6	80/181/5	266	6,712	3.96
1978	72	13.7	464/519/6	989	8,443	11.71
1979	42	17.3	148/557/20	725	7,595	9.55
1980	83	10.2	390/429/27	846	11,816	7.16
1981	75	8.1	318/278/10	606	10,712	5.66

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1979 an E-II-class nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine was identified in Aden. The US defense attache in Oman reported that this particular visit may have taken place without Yemeni permission in a Soviet effort to establish the precedent of a nuclear presence. In the spring of 1980, the first V-class nuclear-powered attack submarine called at Aden, and other submarines serving with the Indian Ocean Squadron used Aden regularly throughout the year, spending about 175 days in the port.

Aden's location at the mouth of the Bab al Mandeb Strait and its utility for reprovisioning (particularly water) and crew rest make it a convenient stopping point for ships of the Indian Ocean Squadron. In the aftermath of the Soviet expulsion from Somalia, there was considerable speculation that Aden would replace Berbera as a Soviet logistic center. Although the USSR reportedly (see below) has pressured South Yemen to grant wider access to Aden, it is doubtful that Moscow would be interested in establishing a Berbera-style support facility in Aden:

- The port would require six months of extensive work to meet Soviet standards.
- Aden is commercially too crowded to permit secluded repair and maintenance activities. 25X1
- The stability of the political arrangements that would accompany such a Soviet investment would be uncertain at best. 25X1
- The development of other facilities in the region, such as Dahlak Island, may indicate the Soviets' preference for several small logistic sites rather than one large naval complex. 25X1

In addition to port facilities, South Yemen provides a staging point for naval reconnaissance flights. Aden International Airfield (Khormaksar) is one of four hard-surfaced fields in South Yemen. Expansion of facilities at Khormaksar began in 1978 and is nearing

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completion. Although the Soviets may not have exclusive access to the expanded facilities, they have staged IL-38 May aircraft to Aden International since November 1978.

Completion of the runway extension at Aden International could allow the use of heavier aircraft, such as the TU-95 Bear D reconnaissance aircraft, thus permitting the Soviets to cover a larger portion of the Indian Ocean, including the area around the US facility at Diego Garcia. Another possibility for Soviet naval air deployments would be the use of other airfields in South Yemen that are under construction (Al Anad) or being improved (Ar Riyan).

Formal Naval Access. Aden has made no formal agreement granting Soviet access to South Yemen's naval facilities, but there was speculation about the extent of Soviet naval base rights throughout the 1970s. Even when the USSR had its facilities in Berbera, the Soviets were interested in formalizing their access to Aden as an alternative.

We believe that during his visit in May 1978 Admiral Gorshkov may have tried to capitalize on the access to Aden that had been permitted during the Soviet sealift to Ethiopia.

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The most recent development on the question of base rights was the signing of a military cooperation agreement in February 1980. We do not know the complete terms of the agreement, but South Yemen's vehement denial that the Soviets had naval base rights in Aden suggests that naval rights may have been discussed in connection with the treaty.

Given their experience in Somalia, it is unlikely that the Soviets are interested in a Berbera-style installation in Aden. Rather, consistent Soviet pressure for a naval treaty argues that Moscow would be interested in formalizing the priority that Soviet ships enjoy in Aden and in securing the right to establish additional facilities at a future time. The significance of the patterns of pressure and resistance is that neither the Soviet naval presence in South Yemen nor the extensive range of other ties between the two states has been sufficient to convince Aden to alter the negative position taken in 1974.

Impact of Soviet Naval Presence

Building Domestic Influence. The role of the Navy in establishing friendly local relations has changed since the initial port calls in the late 1960s. Soviet naval visits no longer focus on public relations and creating popular good will.

The first Soviet port call in Aden took place in June 1968. A Sverdlov cruiser and a Kashin guided-missile destroyer made a four-day stopover. During the visit, formal contacts were carried out on high diplomatic levels. Public relations focused on a soccer match and band concert that were popular with the local people. The public events received wide press coverage, and the Soviet parties sent ashore created a favorable

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impression. Overall, this visit and others during the next few years fit the image of the Soviet Navy as an ambassador of good will, a role cited by Admiral Gorshkov as one of the Soviet Navy's peacetime missions in the Third World.

The Minsk task group's call in June 1979 contrasted with the tone of the early port visits. This seven-day visit focused on military capability rather than on public relations. By concentrating on demonstrating military power, the Soviets shifted away from their own concept of port visits as a means of securing good will to the "imperialist" use of naval demonstration to threaten enemies or pressure allies. It may be that in June 1979, countering the US presence in the Indian Ocean was more important to the Soviets than deferring to local sentiment. It may also be that by 1979 the Soviets had recognized that their naval presence had not created positive local relations. The tone of the Minsk visit may indicate Soviet recognition that its hold on Aden will not be furthered by the friendship born of goodwill visits but is completely dependent on Aden's desire for Soviet military assistance.

Subsequent port calls have included limited activities designed to woo the local population. The two warships that visited in the summer of 1981, for example, were open to the public briefly, and Soviet seamen did present a concert ashore. However, the primary events relating to the visit were on the official level, such as the Defense Ministers reception aboard the ships. The emphasis of such calls, then, is to impress the government and local elites rather than to win friends among the populace.

Influencing Domestic Politics. The clearest use of the Soviet Navy in an effort to influence domestic politics took place in June 1978. In the aftermath of a coup, the Soviets sent a naval force to show the flag in Aden. The presence of Admiral Yasakov, Indian Ocean Squadron commander, demonstrated the importance of the visit. In a novel procedure, Yasakov called a press conference during which he praised Aden's economic and political policies. The message apparently was that Moscow strongly supported the new regime, which had ousted a leadership bent on improving relations with China at Moscow's expense. We believe that the naval visit reinforced the confidence of the pro-Soviet faction making up the new regime and helped intimidate its opponents.

There have been other cases of alleged Soviet naval intervention in South Yemen's domestic politics, such as reports of Soviet and Cuban naval and air sorties to prevent a rebellion on Perim Island. In none of the rumored cases—nor in the case of Yasakov's visit—would naval intervention alone have been decisive.

Influence With the Local Military Establishment. The Yemeni Navy is composed largely of Soviet transfers, including Osa-II-missile attack boats and a Ropucha landing ship. The Ropucha is the first ship of this class transferred since construction began five years ago. These transfers serve both political and naval ends. By upgrading Yemeni naval capabilities, the Soviets increase South Yemen's ability to complement Soviet naval ventures such as patrol of the Bab al Mandeb. By providing conspicuously newer units, such as the Ropucha, which have a political impact beyond their military capability, we believe the Soviets hope to enhance Yemeni commitment to Soviet policies.

Soviet naval advisers probably comprise about 10 percent of the 1,000 Soviet military advisers in South Yemen and are extensively involved with the Yemeni Navy. The pattern of more frequent and more sophisticated naval transfers that has developed since 1977 increases South Yemen's dependence on Soviet advisers, and the rapidity with which some of these units have deployed suggests a high level of Soviet participation in their preparation. Further, if the Soviet practice of only partially training military personnel in Moscow and completing their education in their own country extends to the Navy, Soviet naval instructors must be present in Aden on a continuing basis. Naval assistance also extends into the port authority at Aden where the civilian harbor master and pilots are Soviets.

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Continued Soviet commitment of resources to naval training and aid suggests at least some satisfaction with professional ties between the two navies and the Soviet belief that the process of dependency will ensure South Yemen's continued political support.

Aden's Contribution to Operations of the Indian Ocean Squadron. South Yemen plays an important but not essential role in ongoing Soviet naval operations in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea. In conjunction with the South Yemeni Navy, the USSR maintains a patrol of the Bab al Mandeb Strait.

The USSR would be able to keep its ships in the Indian Ocean even without the access to Aden. Obtaining water elsewhere would complicate squadron operations but would not be an insurmountable problem. Now that some repair and replenishment facilities are available at Dahlak Island to complement the normal Soviet use of afloat logistic support, Aden may be even less essential to daily squadron operations. For example, of the approximately 7,600 Soviet ship-days spent in the Indian Ocean in 1979, only 725 were spent in Aden.

Cooperative Policies on Regional Issues. Logistic aid to Ethiopia during the Ogaden conflict was a clear example of the use of a naval presence to support a regional initiative.[2]

By using Aden to transfer cargo to landing ships, the Soviets avoided the congestion of Ethiopia's ports and unloaded supplies directly on shore. Even using conservative estimates, the sealift was a significant contribution to Ethiopia's operations. Because Soviet support for Ethiopia represented a major test of Soviet policy in the Red Sea area, this case demonstrated the logistic and political value of naval presence in South Yemen.

A similar but less well-known example of using naval presence to reinforce regional policy is the reported Soviet sealift of troops and equipment from Aden to support the Dhofar Rebellion in Oman (1973). Information about this venture is sparse, but it may have been an important precursor of the Ethiopian sealift.

Influencing the Political Options of the Host State. The Ethiopian sealift is also an example of the interaction between naval presence and client foreign policy decisions. In 1975 the Saudis offered generous financial aid to South Yemen in return for the moderation of Aden's attempts to subvert regional states. Two years later, the Saudis also offered to finance arms purchases in the West. Although the Soviets responded negatively to these developments, the developing rapprochement was not halted. Aden's continuing involvement with regional dissident groups

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prompted the Saudis to reassess their policy by October 1977, but South Yemen's subsequent willingness to cooperate in the Ethiopian sealift marked the final turning point. By December 1977 the Saudis had halted their development aid and had cut their crude oil deliveries to South Yemen. Further, the Arab League sanctions applied in mid-1978 undoubtedly took account of the revived threat that Aden's cooperation in the sealift posed.

Naval access accorded the Soviets in connection with supplying Ethiopia clearly played a role in ending the Saudi–South Yemen rapprochement. This limitation of host state options may be, in the long run, a most significant function of Soviet naval presence. In addition, an internal chain of events was set in motion that contributed to the Yemeni coup of June 1978. As a result, the Ethiopian sealift is an instance in which Soviet naval presence had a major impact on both the foreign and domestic policies of a Third World state.

Following the Ethiopia-Somalia crisis, South Yemen moved closer to the USSR. Increased Soviet use of port and air facilities was paralleled by South Yemen's sponsorship of pro-Soviet initiatives, such as proposing alliances between the USSR and the Arab states that oppose the Camp David accords and/or making quiet approaches to restore relations with Somalia. At the same time, instances of Yemeni resistance to Soviet policy—such as disagreements that surrounded the 1979 Friendship Treaty or South Yemen's hostility to Moscow's ties with North Yemen—argue that South Yemen remains more than a Soviet satellite. Areas of bargaining power still exist, notably with respect to the formal terms of naval access.

Naval Prospects

In April 1980 President Ismail—long a Soviet favorite—was ousted. The Soviets had been aware of the frictions within the Adeni leadership but were not overtly hostile to Ismail's successor, Prime Minister al-Hasani. Al-Hasani visited Moscow shortly after assuming power in April to publicly assuage Soviet concerns over South Yemen's reliability and to reaffirm his loyalty. He also postponed a scheduled visit to Saudi Arabia

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Political discord continues in Aden, but none of the possible resolutions would appear to significantly threaten Aden's military ties with the USSR in the near term, and Soviet naval presence is likely to continue to be a valuable tool of influence.

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Mediterranean

Tunisia

Summary

Apart from its initial success in gaining access to the shipyard at Menzel Bourguiba, the Soviet Navy seems to have made little headway in Tunisia. The Tunisians have derived fewer benefits from their agreement to repair Soviet ships at Menzel Bourguiba than they had hoped. Partly as a result, they have not been willing to negotiate additional contracts or to allow the Soviets to establish a foothold ashore by providing naval technicians or advisers.

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Granting the Soviets naval access in Tunisia has had very little effect on Tunisia's relations with neighboring states. Contrary to Tunis's hopes, the Soviets have not moderated Libyan hostility toward Tunisia, which continues to view Qadhafi as its chief adversary.

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Despite these drawbacks, the Tunisians probably will continue to permit Soviet ships to use the yards at Menzel Bourguiba, especially because Western nations appear unwilling to compensate for any economic losses that would result from excluding the Soviets. However, so long as Tunisia remains suspicious of Soviet activities in Africa and other Third World areas, Moscow is unlikely to secure additional access to Tunisian facilities.

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Background: Relations Between Tunisia and the USSR

Although formally nonaligned, the Tunisians have acted as a moderating influence among the Arab nations by pursuing policies comparatively sympathetic to Western, and particularly American, interests. Since its independence in 1956, Tunisia's relations

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with the USSR have been correct, but suspicion of Soviet intentions and activities in Africa have prevented the development of close political ties. Relations between the two countries have improved somewhat in recent years, and the Soviet Navy's use of Tunisian repair facilities at Menzel Bourguiba shipyard has been an important aspect of those relations.

Tunisia's motives for providing repair facilities to the Soviets—and seeking improved relations generally—are both economic and political. The Tunisian Government has repeatedly justified Soviet use of the shipyard facilities in economic terms. Soviet economic credits—although modest—are a welcome supplement to assistance from traditional aid donors. In addition, however, the naval visits serve as a reminder to the West that Tunisia should not be taken for granted. The government has used Western concern about its Soviet ship repair business to press Western countries to use Tunisian shipyards for their own ships—thereby replacing the Soviet trade. Further, good relations with Moscow and Soviet naval visits to Tunisian ports reinforce Tunisia's credentials as a nonaligned state, balancing in part its far more extensive contacts with the West. Finally, Tunisian leaders apparently hoped that the Soviets would restrain Libyan activities as the price of more cordial relations and access to Tunisian ports. Following a Libyan-sponsored raid in early 1980, Tunisia's Prime Minister indicated to the Commander of the US Sixth Fleet that he was concerned about the connection between Libyan military maneuvers and Soviet naval ship activities. Tunisia probably would feel more secure with an explicit Western guarantee, such as the presence of Sixth Fleet ships. In the absence of such a Western guarantee, however,

The US military attache reports that there has been some discord within the Tunisian leadership over aspects of this policy, with the Ministry of Defense taking a harder line toward Soviet visits than other elements of the government. On balance, the leadership seems to believe that the benefits outweigh the possible dangers.

Tunisia's relations with the USSR, therefore, represent a delicate balancing act. The Tunisians endeavor to maintain a harmonious relationship with the Soviets and to extract from that relationship all the benefits they can. As a Tunisian Government official noted they are wary, however, of placing themselves in a position where they could be pressured by the Soviets, and they demonstrate a keen concern for the views of Western countries whose continued support is, in the end, vital.

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Although the USSR's policies toward Tunisia are part of its worldwide efforts to increase Soviet influence with Third World governments, Moscow's principal interest in Tunisia almost certainly is in retaining and improving access to its port facilities. Heightened Soviet efforts to secure or expand naval access in Tunisia during the late 1970s probably were directly related to the deterioration of the relationship between the USSR and Egypt and the expulsion of the Soviet Navy from Egyptian facilities in 1976.

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The Soviets have offered modest levels of economic and military assistance to Tunisia. In 1976 the Soviets agreed to provide $56 million in credits for economic and development purposes—more than half of all the economic assistance provided by the USSR to Tunisia since 1961.

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Naval Facilities

Tunisia has four good ports on the Mediterranean Sea: Safaqis, Susah, Tunis, and the former French naval complex at Bizerte (see figure 11). Bizerte is of particular interest to the Soviets; it contains the Menzel Bourguiba shipyard, run by Socomena.[24] This shipyard could partially replace the facilities the Soviets lost in Egypt. It has four drydocks—two could accommodate F-class submarines, and the largest could handle a Moskva-class helicopter cruiser. The facility has cranes capable of handling repair jobs on

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[24] The Societe Tunisienne de Construction et de Reparations Mecanique et Navale. Both "Socomena" and "Menzel Bourguiba" are routinely used to identify the shipyard.

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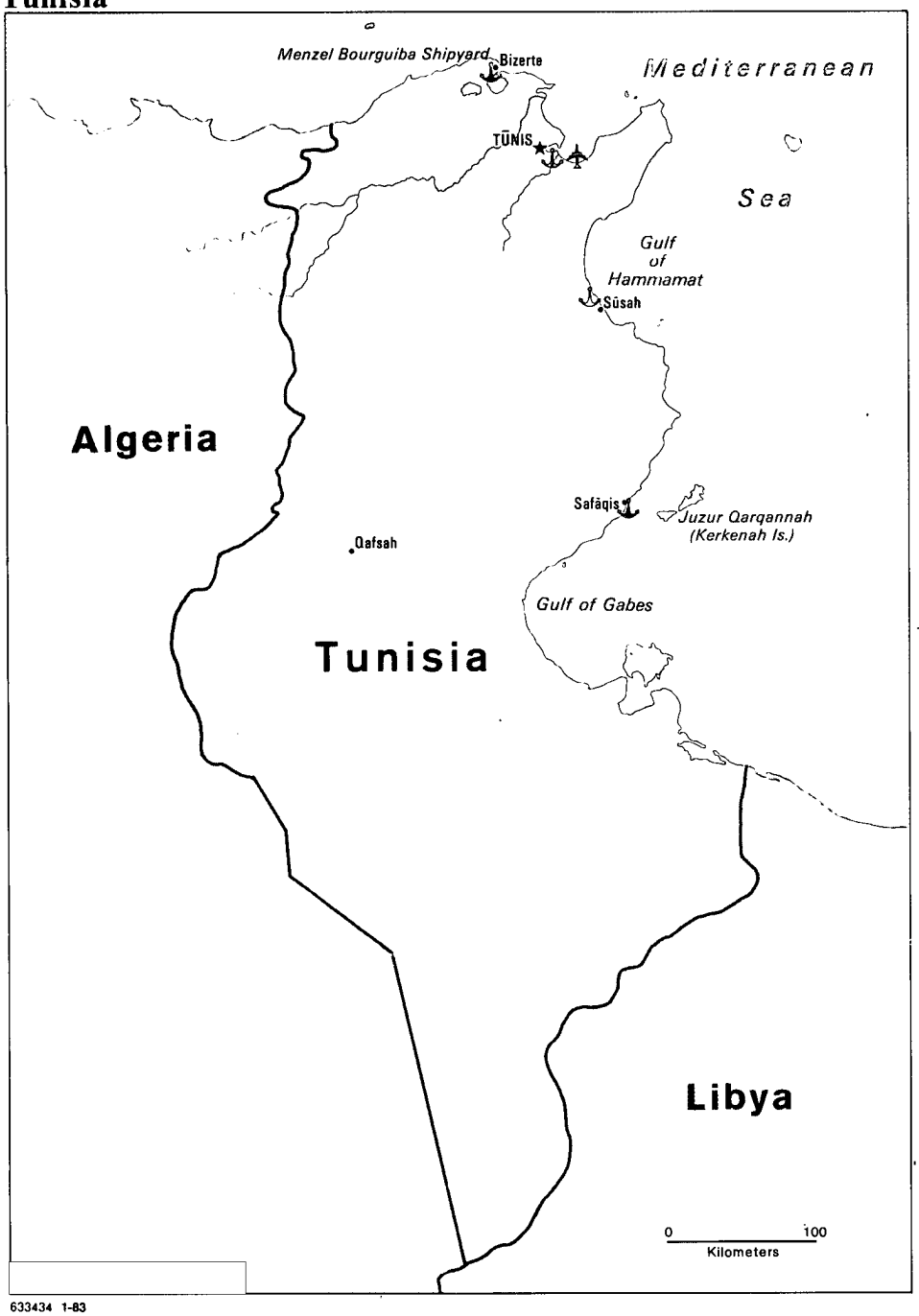
Figure 11
Tunisia



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large pieces of equipment, and a complex of workshops including a machine shop and foundry. Although the shipyard is antiquated by Western standards, is in poor repair, and is underutilized, it is as good as or better than the yards available to the Soviets elsewhere in the Mediterranean.[25] Tunisian workmen are not skilled enough to perform sophisticated repairs, but the yards can handle normal overhaul of medium-size combatants and diesel submarines.

The Tunisian Government would like to obtain financing to improve and modernize the Menzel Bourguiba shipyard. Tunisia has discussed the project with the French, the British, and the Japanese, but the Soviets seem the most likely to be interested enough to provide funding.

Soviet Use of Tunisian Facilities

Soviet Calls to Tunisian Ports. Although a few Soviet hydrographic research ships entered Tunisian ports from 1968-71, the pattern of naval port calls began in 1974, when a Soviet destroyer paid an official visit to Tunis. The Soviets apparently would have liked to have given the visit high visibility, but the Tunisians did not cooperate. The usual ceremonies were observed—official courtesy calls were exchanged and there was a soccer game between the Tunisian Navy team and Soviet seamen—but Tunisian press coverage was modest. A Soviet request for a parade through downtown Tunis was denied on the grounds that there was insufficient time for preparations.

Table 6 shows Soviet use of Tunisian ports from 1974 through 1981. All of the visits to Tunis and some of those to Safaqis and Susah were to obtain provisions and crew rest. Visits to these ports have generally averaged four to five days. Visits to Menzel Bourguiba since 1977 have almost all been for repair or overhaul and have averaged 29 days.

After their initial success in gaining access to Tunisian ports for occasional visits, the Soviets mounted a low-key but energetic diplomatic offensive to increase

[25] By contrast, there are no drydocks at Tartus, Syria—the other Mediterranean port at which the Soviets make frequent and regular repairs—and access to Yugoslav shipyards is limited. A small number of ships can also be repaired each year at Annaba, Algeria, but Algerian facilities are far less satisfactory than those in Tunisia.

Table 6
Soviet Naval Visits to Tunisia

	Total	Tunis	Bizerte	Menzel Bourguiba	Safaqis Susah
1974	6	4	2	0	0
1975	8	7	1	0	0
1976	17	4	8	0	5
1977	17	3	6	8	0
1978	18	0	4	14	0
1979	21	0	8	13	0
1980	20	0	9	11	0
1981	20	0	5	15	0

that access and to use it more effectively to build influence with the Tunisian Government. Following a well-publicized call in August 1975 by a cruiser and a destroyer, a Tunisian official expressed confidentially to US personnel his dismay and that of other senior officials concerning the Soviet tactics. During that call, souvenir buttons were distributed by Soviet crew members in downtown Tunis, and the Soviet admiral commanding the task group held a press conference in which he welcomed a forthcoming trip by Tunisian President Bourguiba to Moscow.

the admiral irritated government officials by taking advantage of a courtesy call to press the Tunisian Defense Minister on the substantive issue of increasing Soviet port calls in Tunisia and by issuing an invitation to a deputy defense minister to visit the USSR—an invitation which the official accepted without clearing. The Defense Ministry evidently believed that the Soviets were exploiting weaknesses in the Tunisian bureaucracy to gain privileges they would not have received through normal channels. Tunisia determined at that time that all future Soviet initiatives should receive high-level review.

Soviet Access to Menzel Bourguiba. In April 1977 Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Nouira signed an agreement during a visit to Moscow to provide for the

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routine repair and overhaul of Soviet naval ships in Menzel Bourguiba shipyard.

For a time, the Tunisian Government maintained that no agreement for routine repairs had been signed and that the Soviet naval ships that could be seen in Menzel Bourguiba were there for "emergency" repairs.

Tunisian officials recognized that the fiction could not be indefinitely maintained and indicated that the Menzel Bourguiba yards were open to ships of all nations on an equal basis. They have repeatedly solicited US business for the shipyard, probably to balance the Soviet visits rather than to displace them.[26]

The Tunisians go to considerable lengths to ensure that the Soviet visits to Menzel Bourguiba are classified as commercial and to treat all commercial users of the shipyard equally. No official protocol activities are allowed in connection with the repair visits: arrangements are made through the shipyard rather than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, foreign national flags are not to be flown aboard the visiting ships, no salutes are to be initiated or returned as they pass Tunisian warships, and no formal calls are to be exchanged with Tunisian military officials. When the USS Hoist was repaired in Menzel Bourguiba in June 1979, these rules were strictly enforced, with one exception—when US Navy officials explained that they could not comply with a requirement that the Tunisian flag, rather than the US flag, be flown, shipyard officials accepted their position without further comment. Later, however, the Soviets complained that they had been required to fly the Tunisian flag when the US ship was not. In one other area, treatment of the two differs significantly: US sailors are not restricted when ashore, but the Soviet sailors are.

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Tunisia has replied to Western protests by claiming that the arrangement with the Soviets is purely economic—to provide jobs for unemployed shipyard workers in the Bizerte area and to bring in much-needed foreign exchange. According to Tunisian officials, Tunisian leaders clearly are aware of the implications of a routine Soviet naval presence in their country, but they seem confident of their ability to limit both the Soviet presence and its effects. Although the Tunisian military is unhappy with the agreement, they cannot counter the economic argument.

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Western observers have questioned whether there is any real economic benefit from the Soviet ship repair business, but it probably is nearly as significant as the Tunisians claim. Soviet use of Menzel Bourguiba has never reached the level reportedly agreed on in 1977; almost 50 Soviet naval ships (mainly auxiliaries) have been repaired there since 1977. The US Embassy has estimated that Socomena employs no more than about 150 Tunisians to repair each Soviet ship; nevertheless, unemployment is a key economic problem in Tunisia, and the loss of even a few jobs is politically significant. The overall value of the repair to Soviet naval

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[26] The United States has agreed to send three ships per year into Menzel Bourguiba for repairs, but these repairs average only about $10,000 per ship in value.

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ships is estimated at about $1.5 million per year in hard currency—a significant portion of Socomena's total $4.5 million earnings and an important element in Tunisia's balance of payments

Restrictions of Soviet Use of Repair Facilities (1979). Western objections to the agreement focused heavily on Tunisian repairs to Soviet submarines. Soviet surface vessels can readily transit the Turkish Straits to be repaired in the Black Sea, but the terms of the Montreux Convention severely limit submarine transits of the Straits. Consequently, virtually all Soviet submarines operating in the Mediterranean come from the Northern Fleet and must return to Northern Fleet shipyards for overhaul. Arrangements have been made for some submarine repairs in littoral states: two F-class submarines per year undergo five-month upkeep periods in Yugoslav drydocks, and Soviet submarines go into Tartus, Syria, on a monthly basis for limited overhaul. A small number of submarines also have been repaired in Algeria by Soviet technicians aboard an accompanying repair ship. All of these arrangements together, however, do not replace the flexibility the Soviets lost when they were denied further access to Egyptian facilities. NATO governments feared that routine access to Tunisian shipyards for submarine repair would permit the Soviets to keep additional submarines in the Mediterranean on a regular basis, as they did before their expulsion from Egypt

In February or March 1979—probably in response to Western representations or as a result of irritation over efforts by the Soviets to increase their access—the Tunisian Government decided to ban repairs to submarines of all foreign powers. The move clearly was aimed at the Soviets; no other power had had its submarines repaired in Tunisian shipyards.

Nevertheless, the new policy was evenhanded in its formulation, reflecting Tunisia's continuing effort to balance its commitments to East and West. For a time, US diplomats had the impression that the new policy banned Soviet submarine visits to Tunisian ports. No Soviet submarine called from late 1978 to June 1980. Since mid-1980, however, there have been several visits by diesel-powered submarines, and the Tunisian Government has clarified its policy, which evidently prohibits only repairs to submarines.

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the Soviets too have pressed repeatedly for a reversal of this policy, offering a contract worth as much as $5 million annually—more than Socomena's estimated annual earnings—on condition that repairs to submarines be allowed. The Tunisians apparently have resisted such blandishments thus far, although they readily use them to solicit more business—or, perhaps, economic or military aid—from Western governments

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Apart from the issue of submarines, we believe that access to Socomena is important to the Soviets. The Soviet shipyards devoted to repair are overcrowded, and the Soviets welcome opportunities to have even a limited number of ships overhauled in foreign yards. Socomena offers an efficient alternative to Tartus. For example, in spring 1978, a Natya-class minesweeper had repeatedly been sent to Tartus for repairs, remaining there for periods of up to two weeks. Finally, the ship was towed to Tunisia, where it was repaired in nine days and returned to duty. In another case, a small yard oiler that is permanently stationed in the harbor at Tartus was towed to Tunisia for repairs lasting 35 days, although the distance to Bizerte is no less than that to a Black Sea port. Moreover, although officials have sometimes turned down Soviet requests for visits at inconvenient times or on short notice, Tunisia generally seems willing to perform emergency repairs on short notice.

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Building Domestic Influence. Soviet ties with the local population are limited. There appear to be no Soviet naval personnel permanently stationed in Tunisia, although a Turkish diplomat stated that the

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Soviets have tried to obtain permission to station some technicians there. Contact between the local population and Soviet personnel is therefore minimal. Soviet sailors have unrestricted access to the small town of Menzel Bourguiba but cannot travel outside of it without specific, by-name permission from the Tunisian authorities. Crews of ships calling elsewhere are restricted in their movements and by the language barrier. Formal tours of Soviet naval ships are occasionally allowed, but access is strictly limited.

Although Tunisian laborers do work on Soviet ships, major interior work is carried out by Soviet personnel, and parts that require repair are removed and serviced in Tunisian workshops. Soviet sailors normally remain below decks and do not socialize with their Tunisian counterparts.

Naval Prospects

Despite Tunisian willingness to repair the ships of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, Tunisian officials follow Soviet naval operations in the Mediterranean with a wary interest, especially those activities near the Tunisian coast. For example, in February 1981, the Tunisian military consulted with the US defense attache about the number of Soviet ships that appeared to be anchoring off the Tunisian island of Kerkenah.

The continued ties between the USSR and Libya are a prime source of Tunisian suspicions about the Soviet Navy and will probably prevent any expanded Soviet naval access. Tunisia looks to the West to protect it from any spinoffs of the Soviet-Libyan rapprochement. In January 1980, for example, during a period of extreme tensions in relations with Libya, Prime Minister Nouira told the US Ambassador of his concern over Soviet "maneuvers" in the Gulf of Hammamet, where the Mediterranean Squadron has one of its major anchorages. He believed that the maneuvers were somehow connected with Libyan maneuvers on the Tunisian border a few days before. A week later, on 26 January, following a Libyan-sponsored coup attempt by Tunisian exiles who attacked the western town of Qassah, three French combatants—a cruiser and two frigates—were sent to patrol in the Gulfs of Hammamet and Gabes. Reportedly one of the ships anchored in a harbor near Tunis.

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There has been no public Tunisian reaction to the initiation of Soviet port calls and aircraft deployments to Libya in 1981. The Tunisians are almost certainly concerned about Soviet calls to Tripoli but probably will wait to see if Moscow's naval ties with Libya embolden or restrain Qadhafi before they take any action. Tunisia might restrict Soviet calls to Socomena as a warning—no combatants were scheduled for repairs as of December 1981—but as yet has not communicated any change in policy.

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